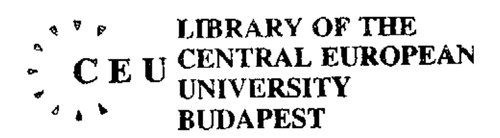
YALE
RUSSIAN AND EAST EUROPEAN
PUBLICATIONS

NATIONAL CHARACTER AND NATIONAL IDEOLOGY IN INTERWAR EASTERN EUROPE



Yale Russian and East European Publications

NATIONAL CHARACTER AND NATIONAL IDEOLOGY IN INTERWAR EASTERN EUROPE

EDITED BY
IVO BANAC
AND
KATHERINE VERDERY

NEW HAVEN
YALE CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL AND AREA STUDIES
1995

IN MEMORY OF

GEORGE WILSON PIERSON

RESPECTED COLLEAGUE AND LOVED UNCLE

YALE RUSSIAN AND EAST EUROPEAN PUBLICATIONS, NO. 13

Distributed by Slavica Publishers, Inc.
P.O. Box 14388, Columbus, Ohio 43214

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
National character and national ideology in interwar Eastern Europe /
edited by Ivo Banac and Katherine Verdery.
p. cm. — (Yale Russian and East European publications ; no. 13)
"Articles . . . read and discussed at the International Conference
on National Character and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern
Europe, which was convened at the Inter-University Center of Post-
Graduate Studies in Dubrovnik, Croatia, from May 31 to June 4,
1989"—CIP info p.
ISBN 0-936586-13-3 (hardcover : alk. paper)
1. National characteristics, East European—Congresses.
2. Nationalism—Europe, Eastern—Congresses. 3. Europe, Eastern—
History—1918-1945—Congresses. I. Banac, Ivo. II. Verdery,
Katherine. III. International Conference on National Character and
National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe (1989 : Dubrovnik,
Croatia) IV. Series.
DJK26.5.N38 1995
947.084—dc20 95-679
CIP

Typography by Tseng Information Systems, Inc.
Printed in the United States of America by BookCrafters, Inc.

Contents

Acknowledgments

The articles collected in this volume represent most of the papers that were read and discussed at the International Conference on National Character and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe, which was convened at the Inter-University Center of Post-Graduate Studies in Dubrovnik, Croatia, from May 31 to June 4, 1989. The conference was conceived by the members of the Joint Committee on Eastern Europe, "joint" because it is sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) and the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), as part of a series of scholarly meetings on interwar Eastern Europe.

It is clear, in retrospect, to what extent we all felt that the interwar period was key in shaping the subsequent face of Eastern Europe. But we could hardly suspect in May 1989 how quickly the issues of the interwar period, particularly the nationality disputes, would reemerge in the area. To be sure there were already some hints. The tottering of Yugoslavia gained speed in early 1989. The whole communist world was disaffected in ethnic matters, too. But all of that seemed like old business, as was the fact that the invited guests from Romania, as always, failed to gain exit visas for the conference. Still, we could not predict that East European communism would be a dead letter within several months and that the Hotel "Imperial" in which we resided, as well as the Inter-University Center itself, would be gutted by the Yugoslav army two years later.

The editors are grateful to the other members of the Joint Committee, particularly Keith Hichins and Ivan Szelenyi, who conceived this conference with us. Special thanks go to the two commentators, Benedict Anderson and Daniel Chirot, who participated actively in the discussions. We are grateful to the ACLS and SSRC for allocating funds for this meeting, as well as for the editorial and translation work that followed. Jason H. Parker, executive associate at the ACLS, was central to the conference's success. In this instance, too, we increased the debt that the JCEE and the scholarly community as a whole owes him. We are delighted to acknowledge the special help of the following: Beta Dragičević of the Inter-University Center; the

staffs of Emona-Travel and Hotel "Imperial"; James Mooney, who copyedited the manuscript; and Kelly Allen, who typed it. We only regret that the speed that characterized our perception of East European nationality problems was not matched in the production of the proceedings.

I.B.
K.V.

Introduction

KATHERINE VERDERY

On a global scale, the sentiment of national belonging is among the most potent of social forces, and it has been so for at least two centuries. Political action taken in the name of national liberation or national development has been responsible for secessions, wars both internal and international, the breakup of multinational empires, movements of decolonization, increased prosperity for some once-oppressed national groups, and new oppression for other groups. Nowhere have these multiple effects of national sentiment been more consequential than in the eastern part of Europe, culminating in the collapse of the multinational Soviet Union and its East European empire.

Given this significance of national sentiment, it is not surprising that scholars have devoted themselves persistently to the subject. Among other themes, they have explored the historical rise of nationalism in general,[1] the origins of particular national conflicts or movements,[2] the quality of interethnic relations in multinational contexts,[3] and the politics through which national consciousness is sometimes constructed.[4] Contributors to this literature have included

1. See, for example, Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983), Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), Eric R. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1990), Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1986).

2. See, for example (restricting ourselves to Eastern Europe), Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), Istvan Deak, *The Lawful Revolution: Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians, 1848–1849* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), Keith Hitchins, *The Rumanian National Movement in Transylvania, 1780–1849* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), Oscar Jászi, *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929), Roman Szporluk, *The Political Thought of Thomas G. Masaryk* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1981).

3. See, for example, Katherine Verdery, *Transylvanian Villagers: Three Centuries of Political, Economic, and Ethnic Change* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), William G. Lockwood, *European Moslems: Economy and Ethnicity in Western Bosnia* (New York: Academic Press, 1975).

4. See, for example, John Borneman, *Belonging in the Two Berlins* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1992), Susan Gal, *Politics of Language, Language of Politics: The Construction of National Consciousness in Modern Hungary* (in press), Andrew Lass, *Voice of Tradition: Modern Czech Scholars and Their Medieval Folk* (in press), Katherine Verdery,

both persons indigenous to the societies about which they write and outsiders interested in understanding a given national context. For Eastern Europe, they have produced an immense body of knowledge about the origins, forms, and consequences of national sentiment.

Over the course of the last century, these intellectuals—and especially those native to the countries about which they write—have contributed to something else, however, besides greater knowledge of the national phenomenon: by treating it as an object of knowledge, they have helped to construct the phenomenon itself. This was true above all of Eastern European writings from the period between the two World Wars, when both individuals and groups throughout the region sought to define more clearly the national identity of states whose configurations had changed dramatically in the wake of World War I. Among the many problems entailed in building the newly emergent states and establishing their participation in the international community, it was believed, was the problem of defining each nation's identity, which would in turn influence policy concerning both its internal development and its most suitable external alliances. Thus, scholars of all stripes, clergymen, artists, and politicians set about debating how best to characterize the identity of their nation. Regardless of who they were and from which institutions they acted, virtually all of the ideas they proposed were collectivist, positing homogeneous groups ("the people," "the nation") that transcended any social divisions internal to the nationality. Through their arguments, and by repeatedly constituting the nation as an object of discourse, they confirmed the existence of unified "nations" (even in cases where the unity of pre-existing ethnic groups might have been questionable). More generally, they further consolidated the national ideologies that had evolved during earlier decades and centuries.

National ideology and national character

It would help to clarify our intentions in this volume if we explained the meaning and significance of the central terms of our title. We use the term "ideology" to mean neither "false consciousness," as in some writings of Marxist inspiration, nor "propaganda," as in

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National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991).

the texts of sovietology. It refers rather to ideas and symbols materialized in action, the result of structured processes through which are formed the human subjectivities that influence action and the perception of alternatives. In this sense, a "national ideology" is a form of subjectivity or identity in which the person feels him- or herself to belong to something called "a nation," and behaves in ways that show this feeling—such as responding to the invocation of national symbols, or invoking them oneself. As a subjectivity, it may entail greater or lesser degrees of consciousness and political mobilization, but it always implies dispositions linking the individual with the collective "nation." A national ideology is therefore crucial to the development of a nation-state.

Like all forms of human subjectivity, it is a social product, not something that human beings carry in their genes. Scholars disagree on *when* this form of subjectivity came into being historically—and the disagreements are apparent in the pages of this book.[5] There is somewhat wider acceptance, however, of the idea that certain actions of individuals, especially the actions of the political and intellectual elites who so often create national movements, serve to deepen and render more conscious the subjective feeling of national belonging—thus, to create national ideologies.

One of the most significant and widespread of the processes through which national ideologies were strengthened in Eastern Europe was a perennial questioning about the nature of national identity: what kind of a people are we? A principal vehicle for answering these questions was debate over the "national character" (sometimes also referred to as the "national essence"). This notion rested on the Romantic idea that each people had both a special genius and a unique mission; to establish the nation's character was seen as an indispensable part of the search for the proper course of each people's development in the community of nations. A people whose essence was thought to be peasant and agrarian, for instance, would not be suited to a mission or a developmental project that included in-

5. The most basic division is between those who see national ideology as a relatively late product (as of the eighteenth century or so), developed particularly through the actions of societal elites in connection with the rise of capitalism, and those who regard it as of much greater lineage, evident as early as Antiquity and pervasively present among all social groups. Some scholars of the latter persuasion are also inclined to see national (or at least ethnic) belonging as a kind of human universal, a position eschewed by those of the former persuasion.

dustrialization. Predictably, discussions of the nation's essence often concerned the national character of other groups, from whom the given group was to be set apart. Hungarians, for example, "found" themselves to be a melancholy people at about the same time that Germans were identifying themselves and their music as jolly and good-natured,[6] just as Hungary's nobles had long insisted on Hungarians' inaptness for the commercial ventures at which Germans excelled (see Pach's paper, this volume).[7]

Thus, discussions of the national character involved constructing representations of national "self" and "unself," or "self" and "other," which served to sharpen a national self-definition. The emphasis might fall upon the definition of a type of modal personality or, more generally, upon characteristics that were taken to define the people as a whole. In such discussions, that something called a "national character" or "national essence" existed was not itself considered debatable: its significance, both cultural and political, was seen as beyond any doubt. No one seemed to find it in the least problematic to explain a nation's defeats or problems in terms of its "character," even if the definition of that character was still in dispute. This undoubtedness is what makes national character an ideological premise, in spite of the arguments that swirled around it.

The importance of national character for the formation of national ideology does not end with its taken-for-grantedness as a premise of debate. Defining ideologies not simply as ideas but as prisms through which people perceive, experience, and contest their social relations—that is, defining ideologies as subjectivities, as forms of identity[8]—gives both practical and analytic significance to any ideological element that links individual subjects with their collectivity. For individual members of a nation to experience the world in terms of a self that is national requires bringing together the sense of self

6. Fenyö István, *Az irodalom respublikájáért: irodalomkritikai gondolkodásunk fejlödése, 1817–1830* (Budapest: Akademiai Kiadó, 1976).

7. Norbert Elias offers a fascinating account of how notions of different national character emerged from the attempt of German burghers to differentiate themselves from the French and from francophile German nobles. See his *The History of Manners* (New York: Pantheon, 1978), pp. 1–50.

8. See Philip Corrigan and Derek Sayer, *The Great Arch: English State Formation as Cultural Revolution* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1985), p. 141.

and the sense of one's group: self and group must be experienced, simultaneously, as constitutive of the person.

The notion of a national character establishes precisely such a link. "Character," whether it is taken to be something inborn or something molded by experience,[9] is a notion that can apply equally to persons and collectivities: much as one might explain an individual's trajectory through life in terms of his being of a rigid, uncompromising character or supple and adaptable, one can explain the tragedy of Poland's successive partitions by the intransigent and impractical national character of Poles (see Chojnowski's paper). To speak of "national character," then, is to posit the nation as a "collective individual."[10] Those who spoke of national character were establishing, as a natural category, a supraindividual entity—the nation—that could be talked about in terms appropriate for discussing individual selves. The reproduction of this collective entity could then be assumed to emerge naturally from the reproduction of its individuals, through an inner disposition or propensity known as character.[11]

9. This difference is essential, serving to demarcate what we might call racist from other forms of ethno-national ideology. Most scholars see "racist" ideologies as those which fix a person's identity on the basis of incontestable physical difference, like skin color or hair type, as distinct from other kinds of ethnic or national ideologies that distinguish on the basis of difference taken to be cultural (and therefore generally subject to alteration). In my view, the salient distinction between the two forms is not whether they refer to *physical* versus *cultural* difference but whether they presume that difference is *immutable* versus *mutable*. That is, a racist ideology is one that classifies a person on the basis of what are socially presumed to be *unchangeable* characteristics, like skin color, as distinct from other ideologies that classify on the basis of criteria that are at least in theory *changeable*. One cannot cease to be black and become white, but one can learn other languages, adopt other cultural forms, etc. Although physical traits are in objective terms generally unchangeable and cultural ones are not, some systems of ethnic classification nonetheless proceed on the contrary assumption. For instance, many Hungarians in the nineteenth century spoke of Romanians *as if they were incapable of civilization*—that is, in racist terms but with culture as the relevant trait—while, on the contrary, societies have been documented in which people with a given physical conformation have been initially classified in one way and later classified differently (that is, the social assessment of their physical self had altered. See, for example, James Loewen, *The Mississippi Chinese* [Waveland Press, 1988]).

10. This notion is taken from Richard Handler, *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec* (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1988), who derives it in turn from Louis Dumont's "Religion, Politics, and Society in the Individualistic Universe," Proceedings of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britian and Ireland (1970), pp. 31–45.

11. A side effect of this way of viewing the world is that problems experienced by "the nation" are seen as best handled not through internal struggle among different classes but through reform of the "national soul." It is in this sense that some scholars have seen national ideologies/subjectivities as obscuring people's "true" [class] interests, and thus as a form of false consciousness. In rejecting a conception of ideology as false consciousness, we also

Whereas other ways of identifying the nation emphasized externalities and behavior—language use, religious practice, dress, customs like group-specific life-cycle rituals, and so forth—discussions in terms of character and essence[12] brought in an inner dimension. The idea of national character enriched national ideologies by rendering more explicit a realm of inner feeling that was, at best, only implied in definitions identifying persons as members of an ethnic group or a nationality through what they speak, wear, or do. Those who wrote about national character were helping to create the idea that human beings have an inner space of dispositions (whether conscious or not is unimportant) that determines their behavior. This inner space could then be addressed by politicians who hoped to marshall support on the basis of a feeling of attachment and belonging.

The idea of national character also tended to create national subjectivities as facts of *nature*. Although in western societies the "nature-nurture" argument has produced partisans for the view that a person's character is not necessarily given by "nature," the far more common view in human history (and certainly among those Eastern Europeans of whom I have experience) is that character is seen as a fact of nature: human beings are "born" a certain way, and that is just how they are. Similarly, nations are "born" a certain way, and that way constitutes their character, which puts its imprint on the character of those born into them.

The idea of national character, then, accomplished two exceedingly important things in those societies where it came to be an object of discussion (and, through discussion, a social reality). It helped to form the subjectivities of individuals in a way that linked them directly to their nation, and it expressed the qualities of both in terms of a metaphor (character, essence) generally understood as *natural*. Inasmuch as the most basic fact of any successful ideology is that its categories be taken as natural—that members of the society

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reject the implication that elites intentionally promote national feeling *so as to* diminish class feeling. That something has a particular effect does not mean it was planned as such.

12. The same argument can be made when the terms used are not "character" but national "essence," or the "nature" of a people; the point being made here is clearest, however, with the notion of "character."

see no alternative to them—, then the notion of national character is one of the basic building blocks of a national ideology.

Eastern European national ideologies in context

Evident in Eastern Europe from at least the 17th century onward, national ideologies grew as part of national movements for independence from the one or more foreign powers that incorporated the peoples of the region. By the nineteenth century, the clerics and noblemen who had been the early bearers of national ideologies were superseded by "intellectuals" of various origins, including members of the emerging middle classes associated with changes in the economic and occupational structure. These intellectuals included academics, publishers, lawyers, schoolteachers, producers of culture (novelists, poets), and active politicians; the extent of their explicit alliance with the new economic interests varied from one case to another. In all the countries, however, they formed part of a rising stratum associated with a new configuration of social groups, different from the old aristocratic order that had rested primarily on landed wealth and the occupancy of state office—both of which had often been monopolized by "foreigners." Among the concerns of these groups was to secure the state and its bureaucratic posts in the hands of their own nationality.[13] Purveyors of Romanian national ideology in Transylvania, for instance, tended to be persons struggling for a foothold in the public professions hitherto dominated by Hungarian landowners and functionaries.

During the nineteenth century, one of the principal issues that agitated national ideologists was to account for and take a stand concerning the developmental gap that had opened visibly between Western European countries and the regions to the East. People argued with one another about such questions as, Was the "backwardness" of the East a handicap or an advantage? Did it betray defects among East Europeans that should be rectified, or did it suggest that the

13. Excellent discussion of this process for Hungary and Romania can be found in Andrew Janos, "Modernization and Decay in Historical Perspective: the Case of Romania," in Kenneth Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania, 1860–1940* (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies), pp. 72–116, and *The Politics of Backwardness in Hungary* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).

East nourished important values different from those of the West? Should East Europeans make it their job to close the gap and bring their people up to the level of the West, regarding themselves as an integral part of Europe, or should they, rather, seek to build upon their different strengths and emphasize their non-Western character?

By the turn of the century, such questions preoccupied ever greater numbers of thinkers and politicians, forming the backdrop for the further development of this debate after the First World War. In the period between the wars, however, a new political context transformed the nature of the debate. First, for centuries the life-chances of peoples in the region had been determined by three and then four great empires, whose collapse by 1918 radically transformed the political and cultural map of the region. So, too, did the establishment of the League of Nations, which normalized the idea of "nation" in a newly institutional way.[14] The redrawn map of Eastern Europe and state independence for most East European nationalities made it both imperative and possible to sharpen and modify the definition of "the nation" or "people," so as to suit new realities. With the apparent end of ceaseless imperial expansions and annexations, East Europeans could begin to talk much more seriously about "sacred soil" and to define a national identity within clearly fixed borders. The period marks a special phase in the development of national ideologies in that it was the only period in which most East Europeans had relatively free rein to create their own independent voice, unmuffled by the actual or effective political dominance of outsiders.

Second, in the cases of Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia, single states were formed on the basis of integrative ideologies; in fact, however, only the setting of the ongoing national disputes had changed. Pre-war national elites that had led their respective national movements in often radically different political circumstances now operated within new political units (wherein a unified conception of "national character" was as much in doubt as was the stability of the new states). In Poland and Romania, large national minorities within the state borders posed problems

14. These useful observations were offered by Benedict Anderson, a discussant at the conference where these papers were first presented.

for state integration; the political cohesion of these minorities often was a negative vehicle by which the national identity of the majorities correspondingly cohered. In the states without majorities, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, integration became a function of defining reciprocal ties among the largest Slavic nationalities.

Third, in every case, democratizations of society had brought masses of peasants into the political process—and therefore into the ideological struggles through which politics were conducted. Defining the place of peasants in relation to the "national character" now became a concrete political necessity. In virtually every one of these countries, a division emerged that pitted "urbanists" against "ruralists" or "populists" (as they were called in Hungary, for example), separating those for whom the nation's character was to be defined in relation to all its social groups from those who saw it as epitomized by the peasantry.

Fourth, the interwar years saw a radicalization of national ideologies in all parts of the region. This stemmed partly from the enfranchisement of peasants, partly from other social pressures connected with the growth of capitalist relations, partly from the influence of Bolshevism and the existence of the Soviet Union, and partly from the rise of fascism and related ideologies of the radical right, with their own notions of national character and national destinies. Thus, discussions that began in the 1920s with a wide variety of positions on what defined the nation tended to simplify into two or three polarized camps. Among the positions that disappeared were some older all-regional integrative ideologies, notably Slavism and the ideology of "Central Europe." Emphasis now went to distinguishing each nation from its neighbors.

The papers in this volume explore how the national character as ideology was shaped through discussion and action during the period between the two World Wars. Most of them do so by examining a particular case, in a particular domain of endeavor—a writer or philosopher who put forth certain notions of Yugoslavness, Polish politicians arguing over how to cleanse the Polish soul, a Bulgarian literary hero, or specific formulations of what Czechs ought to be like. Some of the papers also make a more formal argument about why the idea of national character was so important, or what it was accomplishing in social terms. The utility of the papers is not,

however, chiefly in formal arguments of this kind but in presenting the variety of treatments of the subject in a number of countries during a single time period. In all of Eastern Europe national character was being argued; some of the themes recurred from place to place, some were more or less specific to one or two countries, but everywhere this notion played a major role in the consolidation of national ideologies. The objective of these papers is not to answer the question "What *is* the national character of the Hungarians, Romanians, or Serbs?", but rather to explore the ways in which various groups within each society posed and answered that question. We ask, among other things, *Who* was central to defining "national character"—what sorts of people, from what social-structural vantage point, with what proposed definitions, and with what social effects?

The new societal elites who sought to define national character in this period of Eastern European history were struggling with a number of problems simultaneously, in seeking to adjust to the new post-war realities of their countries; most of these problems have been sketched above. Many of the participants perceived the problems and argued over their solutions in the idiom of national identity, even when the problems concerned more practical, material issues. These included, Will the environment for writing and selling novels be protected from the invasion of literatures from abroad?[15] What standards of taste and evaluation will prevail in defining our literature, our philosophy, our ethnology? Will the new vacancy in the university be filled by a chair of Esthetics or by Sociology? In what form should foreign investment be permitted in our country? To see the participants as pursuing matters of this sort through a national idiom, as do some of the following papers, is not to say that such persons were motivated by a quest for power and were simply manipulating the national idiom toward that end: it is, rather, to show how deeply ingrained a national ideology already was, such that all manner of questions were perceived and answered in its terms. It is also to insist that the discussions took place in a broader context, and that their stakes were not simply intellectual but also political and

15. For an excellent discussion of the links between national identity and questions of protectionism in interwar Romania, see Mihai Dinu Gheorghiu, "La stratégie critique de la revue 'Viaţa românească' (1906–1916)." In Alexandru Zub, ed., *Culture and Society* (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei), pp. 127–136.

economic. Whether or not the papers that follow make these issues explicit, the political and economic context was crucial in making the debates so fervent.

One further clarification, relevant to all the cases covered here, should be made concerning the context in which these arguments were taking place. As mentioned briefly above, they were all deeply influenced by the existence of Bolshevism, newly installed on the eastern flank of this region and generally perceived as a threat to those in power. In some of the countries (Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia), this threat caused the Communist Party to be outlawed during the interwar years; in all of them, the internationalism of the Bolsheviks and their relative lack of sympathy for national sentiment (except where it promised "progressive" revolutionary action) meant that the political left in the various countries participated minimally in the attempts to define national character. In consequence, the discourse on national identity was largely delivered into the hands of the political right and center.

This clarification is important for two reasons. First, much of what went on in the debates on national character would later feed into the fascist currents that emerged throughout Eastern Europe during the 1930s. Therefore, the debates reported in the papers to follow came to have a significance not always apparent in the specific terms they utilized. These fascist associations should be assessed with caution, however, for often the uses to which the national idea was put rather outstripped the intentions of those who had joined in arguing about the nation's identity. For this reason, and second, one must be hesitant—especially in evaluating the resurgent national discourse of the post-socialist period—to assume that nationalist ideas automatically indicate right-wing associations.[16] That association was a conjunctural one, specific to the 1930s and to the positions adopted then by both the Communist International and particular governments. The inter- (not to say anti-) nationalism of Communist parties was significantly reduced in the decades after 1960, some Communist-led governments—such as Romania under Ceauşescu, for example,

16. Indeed, what is meant by "right" and "left" in the post-socialist period is not easy to say. During the attempted coup in the Soviet Union in August of 1991, it was positively astonishing to hear the term "right-wing" used to characterize a coup organized by the last hold-outs of the Communist party.

or Poland in the late 1960s—even promoting a national discourse that would earlier have been suppressed. Thus, in the politics of the 1990s, one might expect to find national ideology invoked by parties of both "right" and "left," in ways that the context of the 1930s precluded.

Objectives and organization of this volume

With this volume, which grew out of a conference held in May 1989, we hope to achieve more than the simple presentation of some ideas about national character in interwar Eastern Europe. We aim, first, to promote a more synthetic view of the region, in both geographical and disciplinary terms, by broadening the intellectual framework in which the problems of national ideology have been previously handled, and second, to provide a foundation for more informed treatment of the reassertion of national ideology in the post-socialist period.

By replacing with a region-wide coverage the country-by-country view that has prevailed among specialists, we hope to build toward a synthesis of developments in the region as a whole. To our knowledge, no one has surveyed the "national character" aspect of interwar East European nationalism; to the extent that the subject has been covered at all, it is piecemeal, usually by scholars writing within the countries in question (and in a manner different from what we propose). To provide a sense of the trajectory of these discussions of the national character for all countries of the region together, and thereby of the similarities and differences in the elaboration of this aspect of national ideologies, would be a significant step in constituting an integrative view of the region. Given the fragmented state of East European studies, we regard this as perhaps our most important objective.

The volume also contributes to an interdisciplinary view of the problem, by including with intellectual historians (who have been the chief bearers of this inquiry) some social scientists and literary scholars. A synthesis of disciplines is important not only for bringing the various perspectives of different fields to bear on the central problem but also because in each East European country, members of virtually all disciplines contributed to the debates; specialists in the different disciplines can offer a specialist angle on the

various domains of endeavor in a way that is more comprehensive than the usual intellectual history. In addition, it is very important to include literature and the arts, in which a preeminent aim was often to present images of the given "people" and its national character.

The Great Divide of the Second World War has produced its own fragmentation of the East European region in western scholarship, as social scientists have too often investigated present trends without adequate appreciation of their antecedents. This book will prove useful for scholars of developments in the late socialist period and the 1990s, marked by a resuscitation of many of the interwar concerns with national character. In Romania, for example, the 1970s brought not only numerous re-publications of writings by many active contributors to the interwar debates on the "Romanian character," but also a renewed argument about issues of Romania's relation to the West—a central theme in the interwar debates. Similar arguments continued in even more overt forms after December 1989. This contemporary phenomenon cannot be understood without a firm grasp of the discussions of the interwar period.

Finally, the volume helps to broaden the way one might analyze the matter of "national character," a subject now reemerging after a number of years in the shade. Unlike both the participants in the interwar discussions and the anthropological literature of the 1940s and '50s, which asked what the different "national characters" were, these papers do not presume that a "national character" exists and requires definition. We see it as an ideological form, not a social given. We also encourage a holistic treatment, in which discussions about national character are viewed as a social phenomenon, one that must be related to larger issues in social and economic history rather than left to the realm of intellectual history where it has, for the most part, languished. Although not every paper here offers an analysis of the political or economic context, the organization of the volume as a whole will provide, we hope, an impetus for more systematic treatment of the subject in these terms henceforth.

Contributors to this volume come from the United States, Canada, Western Europe, and Eastern Europe. In selecting participants and the topics they are to treat, we intended to achieve a distribution roughly proportional to the populations of the various East European national groups to be discussed; owing to the customary vagaries of

edited volumes, however, this goal eluded us. As a result, the book overrepresents Romania. That the important Czechoslovak case figures with only one paper and that the former Yugoslavia is underrepresented should by no means be taken to reflect an editorial view that the latter cases are adequately covered in this book.

Polish Concepts of Native Culture

JERZY JEDLICKI

> Nations must defend themselves against the contempt of foreigners and self doubt. A healthy instinct of self preservation leads in that direction especially those nations that have become politically decrepit and are tormented by the painful memory of lost glory.
>
> Władysław Konopczyński[1]

In 1917 it seemed almost certain that the rebirth of the Polish state would be one of the results of the war. Although nobody knew how the boundaries of this state would be drawn, it was obvious that it must unite lands which for a hundred or even a hundred and forty years were part of one of the three partitioning states. In the Polish intellectual elite the prospect of such a re-unification elicited not only excitement, but also an understandable apprehension: will this work? what precisely is the nature of the bond which unites, or could unite, lands so long separated, social classes so alien to each other, dialects so disparate? This bond was to be the one thing the Poles had not lost through the partitions, and which they had even managed to enrich. Culture was to be the medium of awakening, in all classes and regions, of national and civic consciousness, of attachment to a common homeland.

In order to cope with the task of unification laid on it, culture itself had to be unified and differentiated from other national cultures at least as much as national languages differed. On the eve of independence, the Polish intelligentsia faced a double task: to make sure of this separateness, but at the same time also to make sure that reborn Poland be a legitimate member of the European culture community. The task was of significant practical importance, since the program of national education, and eventually even perhaps the stability of the new republic, depended on the way it would be imple-

1. "O wartości naszej spuścizny dziejowej" (1918), reprinted in M.H. Serejski, ed., *Historycy o historii*, vol. I (Warsaw, 1963), p. 597.

mented. It is therefore not surprising that about 1918 a large number of treatises appeared, with such titles as: *Poland in the Universal Culture, Foundations of National Culture, On the Life and Disasters of National Civilization, the Spirit of Polish History, Poland in the Light of its Own and Foreign Mentality,* and so forth. The authors of these volumes, all differences of opinion notwithstanding, ascertained whether the independence of Polish culture could support, or even legitimize, the independence of the Polish state, and what values did that culture present to itself and to foreigners.

The problem of sovereignty of culture had a long history. The year 1918 was neither its beginning nor its end: it had only altered radically the context in which this incessant debate of the mandarins was taking place.

I

In subject countries, the intelligentsia could usually choose either losing national character and becoming assimilated to the dominant culture, or affirming, in revolt and resistance against domination, its own national traditions and values. In Poland the conflict of these two positions had already permeated the culture of the Enlightenment and of Classicism, the defense of tradition and nationality, both in life and in art, obtaining gradually—especially after the downfall of the state—the moral sanction of critics and writers.[2] Since then the tracking and branding of foreign influences in customs and language, in art and social thought, had become almost a reflex, and not only just among conservatives. And in countries endowed with a less rich historical heritage and a more meager intellectual elite, the idea of nativeness of culture and its defense against foreign influence could become a veritable obsession, as with the Slovak followers of Štur.[3]

2. See Jerzy Jedlicki, *Jakiej cywilizacji Polacy potrzebuja* (Warsaw, 1988), pp. 19–76; idem, "Native Culture and Western Civilization (Essay from the History of the Polish Social Thought of the Years 1764–1863)," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 28 (1973), pp. 63–85; Andrzej Zieliński, *Naród i narodowość w polskiej literaturze i publicystyce lat 1815–1831* (Wrocław, 1969).

3. Alexander Matuška, "Szturowcy," "Literatura czeska i słowacka," trans. Halina Janaszek-Ivaničkova, in: *We własnych oczach: XX—wieczny esej zachodnio—i południowosłowiański* (Warsaw, 1977), pp. 122–38.

The appreciation and defense of native elements of culture, whatever it might mean in practice, is a psychologically normal though usually naive response to a foreign culture's prevalence; especially where this prevalence is not being countered by the schools or by other national institutions. Only the devotion of the intellectuals can save and revive the language, historical memory, and pride of the humiliated nation.

In a longer temporal perspective the program of safeguarding and cherishing national traits of culture did elicit paradoxical dilemmas, for how is the national to be distinguished from the un-national in literature? If a Polish subject and a clear-cut national tendency are determinant, then—as a Cracow critic had remarked at the end of the century—such popular novels as Sienkiewicz's *Quo Vadis* and Prus's *Pharaoh* are not national.[4] So perhaps the work's message is decisive? Its style? But what message and what style? It was still remembered that in the great literary polemics of the past, for example, in the conflict of Classicists and Romanticists, each side accused the other of defecting from nationality, and this is a serious accusation in a conquered country.

The application of a similar criterion to art ensured the status of national artist to anyone who (in safe Galicia) painted Kosciuszko in the battle at Racławice, or at least a Mazovian landscape or the peasants of Cracow, for—as the already cited critic had complained—"imagination and individuality at once elicit the accusation of unnationality."[5] The modernists did rebel against such narrow patriotic criteria, but not to the extent of wanting the complete liberation of art from the obligation of serving the national cause. They proposed a kind of compromise instead: "We may rightly demand that arts and letters draw their inspiration from a native source, but we have no right to reject works born under different skies. By the nature of things, art is cosmopolitan in the noble sense, the artist cannot bear limitations."[6] Thus the compromise, even if it were to be accepted both by artistic criticism and by public opinion, did not answer the question which tormented Polish, and not only Polish, thought of

4. Ludwik Szczepański, "Sztuka narodowa," *Zycie* 10 (1898), p. 109.

5. Ibid. 9 (1898), p. 98.

6. Ibid. 10 (1898), p. 110; cf. František Xaver Šalda, "Problem narodowości w sztuce" (1903), trans. Jacek Baluch, in *We własnych oczach*, pp. 30–52.

where do these native sources spring from. Much effort was invested in the discovery and exploitation of these sources. Defining the *Polish idea* in social thought and a *Polish style* in art was an important theme of intellectual life at the turn of the century, and we shall return to it.

Ideologists of nativeness wanted creative efforts to bear the mark of Polishness, but at the same time to gain international renown, make the name of Poland famous, and testify to the universal values of her culture. These two criteria—the national and the universal—were neither contradictory nor identical. They were mutually independent to an extent, for each set a different hierarchy of values, and it was difficult to meet them both. Neither the Polish romantic poets, nor such great writers of the modernistic period as Wyspiański or Żeromski, whose entire work was based on the struggle and the drama of national history and the Polish collective fate, had attained a noticeable place in European culture. On the other hand, there were examples of places of honor in Polish culture being achieved through success in Paris and elsewhere in Western Europe. Chopin had been recognized as national composer par excellence based only on the glory and the fame gained in the West, and Marie Skłodowska-Curie, when she was awarded the Nobel prize, became "a great Polish scientist."

The uneasy relationship between the national and the universal measure of greatness and fame seems not to be specifically Polish: this divergence is often the lot of small and politically second-rate nations. Their experiences, fate, and linguistic and cultural idiom must, in order to make their way in the world, break through a much stronger resistance of indifference than when the power of the state lends a glamour even to rebellious artists. Precisely this indifference, this lack of understanding and appreciation by the world of our problems and achievements becomes a profound complex of the national culture, which no longer knows and thus continually tests whether it is perhaps not native enough or not original enough or too imitative and secondary or, to the contrary, too inbred, ego-centric, and particular, and not European enough.

The Polish intelligentsia had found itself relatively early in this magic circle of doubts, as if in a trap from which there is no way out. The discussions between positivists and conservatives, and be-

tween the positivists themselves, took place within that circle. The growing threat of the partitioning powers to the very national identity, to language, to the land and to rights of course favored the sacramentalization of the heritage and the construction of a myth of spiritual, cultural, and finally political unity within the national fortress. Yet this same threat also caused the realization of the need to keep pace with the civilizational progress of the West, of adopting its measures and standards, in order to keep from becoming isolated from it and destroyed.[7] Cultural nationalism and cosmopolitanism thus were twins, in a sense, nurtured by the same cultural process that implanted in the subject country's elites an incurable inferiority complex and the need to compensate for it. Over and over again we had to prove to ourselves and to the world that we are different, and yet the same; different, but not worse; and even if worse, it is because we are better.

Attempts were made to break out of this magic circle, to convince the intelligentsia that the problem of native versus imitative culture was incorrectly formulated. For if culture is an emanation of the national spirit and character, then the national literature, arts, and thought can only be as individual and creative as the national character is strong and self-dependent, in its best manifestation at least. Culture and collective psychology (or morals) were understood to be two aspects of the same thing, and were usually discussed jointly.

From the view-point of such uncompromising critics of the Polish intellectual elite of the modernistic period as Stanisław Szczepanowski and Stanisław Brzozowski, the main fault of the contemporary Polish character was to be seen in passivity, sloth, indolence, and lack of collective energy indispensable for the development of great civilizational work, not only in the spiritual but also in the material, technical, and industrial spheres. Precisely this paresis of character was to condemn Poland to backwardness and separate it from the West. Polish culture—the critics maintained—just as passively chews on its own national tradition, as it assimilates foreign thought and conquests of civilization, without participating in their produc-

7. Jedlicki, *Jakiej cywilizacji*, pp. 265–308; Wojciech Modzelewski, *Naród i postęp: Problematyka narodowa w ideologii i myśli społecznej pozytywistów warszawskich* (Warsaw, 1977), pp. 207–37; Zofia Mocarska, "Od obrony tradycji do narodowej aktywności: Z dziejów kryzysu pozytywizmu," *Znak* 3 (1975), pp. 294–316.

tion. "In respect to cosmopolitan trends," wrote Szczepanowski, "neither passive resistance nor blind imitativeness lead to the goal, but only the digesting of the foreign thought on one's own, in order to make it become native life-blood. Only a nation which thinks on its own, which has its own centers of intellectual development, is capable of that."[8]

Brzozowski mercilessly mocked the cultural tradition of kind-hearted nativeness, embodied for him in the writings of Henryk Sienkiewicz. The development of a national cultural individuality he saw to be a task of supreme importance, which cannot be performed through the sentimental over-estimation of that which is ours, nor through the repetitive phraseology of our belonging to Western culture, but only through participation and competition in all areas of historical endeavor, from philosophy to technology:

> For we should not delude ourselves: bondage has nurtured in us a plethora of organic poisons: it has forced us into torpor and implanted a sense of lack of responsibility: we live against the background of Western culture but we are not aware of the hard collective toil that this culture grows out of.[9]

The conditions were not there ıor part of the intelligentsia to accept and apply to itself such high demands. From the turn of the century until the World War was a period of free and intense circulation of ideas and cultural values, never known before or since. Literary Europe was in fact a cosmopolitan "community of stimuli."[10] The Polish intelligentsia absorbed novelties and did its best to be up to date both in consumption and in its own creative activity. This was not enough. Where a writer or artist in the West had only his originality to be concerned about, in Eastern Europe he was also burdened with additional duties. "The same trends permeate all of Europe, and yet not copying some genial pioneers of the modern orientation, but imposing the mark of individuality or national

8. Stanisław Szczepanowski, "Idea polska wobec prądów kosmopolitycznych" (1897), repr. in his *Idea polska: Wybór pism*, ed. Stanisław Borzym (Warsaw, 1988), p. 261.

9. Stanisław Brzozowski, *Legenda Młodej Polski: Studya o strukturze duszy kulturalnej*, 2nd ed. (Cracow, 1910), p. 264.

10. Kazimierz Wyka, *Młoda Polska*, vol. 1 (Cracow, 1987), pp. 273–75.

separateness on the general trends is the requisite of literary development."[11]

There were thousands of similar statements. Cultural criticism took upon itself political and educational tasks. This was a time of the creation of parties, both legal and clandestine, which aimed at the political activation of the masses. In this agitation, culture was to play the important role for national integration. The nation itself had to be conceived of as a spiritual community, and in consequence, the demand for different variants of the doctrine of nativeness and self-containedness of Polish culture grew again. We shall present three such variants, all of which survived 1918 and continued to develop in independent Poland.

II

In the nineteenth century, so tragic for the Poles, historical memory became the common treasure of the nation's enlightened classes, and was re-assessed in every generation. The most serious Polish debates concerned the representation of the nation's past, especially of the unprecedented downfall of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Poland's partitions weighed on the national consciousness and demanded an explanation which would serve as a political guideline for the present. By the end of the nineteenth century, a self-critical tone dominated in Polish historical thought, imposed suggestively by a few eminent historians from Cracow. They argued that the Commonwealth had fallen because of the egoistic and thoughtless nobility who had been weakening their own state for several centuries until, reduced to helplessness, it had fallen prey to ruthless neighbors. And if this were so, then the first condition of rebirth would be a transformation of the national character, developing in it the virtues of civic order, thrift, and, above all, respect for legitimate authority.

Such didacticism, regardless of its merits, was becoming very uncomfortable at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the work

11. Władysław Rabski, "O najnowszych prądach poezji polskiej" (1892), quoted by Henryk Markiewicz, "Młoda Polska i 'izmy'," in Wyka, *Młoda Polska*, vol. 1, appendix, p. 353.

on the nationalization of the rural and urban masses in all three sectors of partitioned Poland, historical readers played a significant role. They were to awaken fondness, national consciousness, and eventually pride in having a millenary homeland. The peasant and the worker were to become heirs to the tradition of the nobility, since there was no other, but if this tradition was mainly one of faults, errors, and indolence, it would be difficult to maintain any longer the complete discordance between a patriotic history primer for the people and the critical, even masochistic consciousness of the intelligentsia. The intelligentsia, especially the youth who since 1905 had again become eager for the clandestine struggle for independence, needed a different and more heartening interpretation of history. What is more, there existed in Poland the conviction—as it seems now, rather groundless—that the historical pessimism of the Cracow school was spoiling the perception of us in the opinion of the West, for it strengthened the already long-standing stereotype of "Polish anarchy." This consideration started to draw more weight in 1918, when approval of Poland's independence was to depend on the sympathy of Allied powers.

Regardless of transformations underway in academic history, political life awaited a new, romantic version of popular history, which would demonstrate urbi et orbi the high moral character of the Polish nation and of the institutions it had created in the past. Such a version came into being by the end of the war, created independently by several authors. What is interesting was that, this time, it was not grounded in the traditional bravery of the Poles on the battlefield, nor in the history of their national martyrdom. On the contrary, it was concerned with the history of the government and law of prepartition Poland and, what is to us of particular interest, with the self-contained type of culture which was supposed to have developed in the country's history.

Antoni Chołoniewski's inspired *Spirit of the History of Poland* was published in 1917, after the first Russian revolution. A wind of liberation—wrote the author—was blowing through bloodied Europe:

> A longing for a new order has knocked on the gates of history, an order in which the right of free development would be assured for each . . . individual, in which nations could live side by side in

friendly association and not rapaciously waylay each other, in which not the fist, but moral strength would rule. Great ideals have shaken the bosom of the European community.

But these ideals are ours!

They are those which, at the time of our existence as a state, were the contents of our public institutions, and which hostile foreign ideology and our despair had condemned as "romanticism," as proof of practical indolence."[12]

The entire book was a demonstration of the assertion (already proclaimed by the romanticists of the previous century) that the republican and parliamentary Polish system of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was an embodiment, if only for the nobility, of all the human and civic rights of freedom of conscience and national sovereignty, to which Europe had matured only centuries later.

Enough then of historical writing that is only a list of faults and errors. Poles have the right to look upon their historical heritage with love and pride:

It has shaped our mental type, bringing it close . . . to the level of the best collective types of humanity . . . . It has given us the power to survive attempts unheard-of in the history of the world. It has saved our soul from being forced into alien and depraving forms. And it is what makes us today capable of further creative effort in the domain of these great goals, embracing the whole of mankind . . . which, in their broader expansion, are but the continuation of the significant elements of the Spirit of Polish History.[13]

Chołoniewski's book immediately gained great popularity, heightened by numerous polemics. On the eve of recovered independence it soothed the Polish concern over being Europe's periphery, and eased the memory of national defeats and humiliations. Artur Gòrski, the author of an uncompleted popular outline of the history of Polish political and intellectual culture ending with the seventeenth century, had a similar goal. In lofty language he tried to render the unique beauty of that tradition:

12. Antoni Chołoniewski, *Duch dziejów Polski*. 2nd ed. (Cracow, 1918), pp. 22–23.
13. Ibid, p. 191.

> It is necessary to espy the mysteries of the very genius of the race, the separateness of its style in collective life, in moral character, in history, in art, in a word its creative *noumenon*, which nations bring with them and gradually develop with unyielding inner necessity.[14]

The book was written against the nationalistic doctrine of national egoism. The Polish *noumenon* consisted of the native righteousness of national character and the conviction, fulfilling itself in history, that the moral idea will eventually prevail over brute force. If adverseness is the essence of German mentality, conciliation is that of the mentality of the Poles: the according of opposites, the joining of nations (as exemplified by the union with Lithuania), the co-existence of alien elements.

> This is what sets Poland apart from the surrounding peoples: humanity, the faith in man. This nation had a heart and had introduced it into history. . . . National or racial differences had existed here only to the extent that they were differences in moral character.[15]

Gòrski did not idealize the past the way Chołoniewski did. The downfall of the Polish nobility was due to their being incapable of respecting their own laws. Their history is over, but nobility of spirit has endured as a significant trait of Polish nature: independence of conscience, attachment to the family home, dignity, magnanimous generosity for other nations. This same nobility is found in the Polish country folk, who are heirs to the democratic tradition and will be those who continue it, to ensure that the immense chain of generations does not break.[16]

This was an epigone's philosophy of history, expressed in the not-yet-completely-expired style of Young Poland, with a distant echo of Romantic Messianism, but also with the will to adhere to the ethos of post-war Europe, which was expected to be one of liberal democracy, self-determination of nations, and lasting peace.

Elements of romantic philosophy were current in the Polish writing of the first inter-war decade. They also influenced the works of professional historians, several of whom engaged in speculation on the mentality of the nation, either primordial and expressed in its

14. Artur Górski, *Ku czemu Polska szła* (Warsaw, 1918), p. 4.
15. Ibid., pp. 193–200, 277–85.
16. Ibid., pp. 296–300.

history or, conversely, shaped by that history. Either way, the character of the nation (alias its soul) left its mark on the type of its culture and Poland was seen as a nation of the spirit among nations that have become materialistic, and the most profoundly Christian of them all. The historian J.K. Kochanowski thus explained what war meant for different nations: "The Poles have made it into an exalting epic, the Germans—a sinister machine crushing the world, the Romanic peoples a sacral act of redemption, England a trade operation, and Russia a cannibals' dance."[17] The separateness of characters is expressed not only in literature and art, argued that author, but also in science, for each nation, due to its separate mental organization, experiences natural phenomena in its own way and discovers its own truths, which only when taken together make up the polyphony of human knowledge. The intelligentsia will fulfill its historical mission only when it will consciously strengthen this separateness of the nation, which is the source of its creative forces.[18]

Kochanowski had brought the "psychology of nations" to a curious extreme, but in a more moderate version this kind of analysis was respected. Franciszek Bujak, a serious historian and sociologist, though rejecting Kochanowski's speculations, attempted to rationalize the notion of national character, in the conviction that a common language, historical vicissitudes, and common conditions of existence create a certain similarity of thought, emotion, and will that become expressed in the Polish national culture. From that culture one can deduce the dominance of the emotional factor over the intellectual one, strong attachments to the homeland and to language, freedom, custom, and religion, a propensity to heroic impulse rather than to systematic work, a great sensitivity to foreign influence together with the inability to take them profoundly to heart, and so forth.[19] This inventory of traits was but the old romantic stereotype of the Pole, processed with something of a researcher's reserve.

In general, with the passing of the years after 1918, and the gradual revelation of the not-too-lofty Polish ordinariness, the self-portrait

17. J. K. Kochanowski, *Polska w swietle psychiki własnej i obcej: rozwazania*, 2nd ed.. (Częstochowa, 1925), p. 357.

18. Ibid., pp. 397–402, 418–20.

19. Franciszek Bujak, *Kultura ludowa na tle kultury narodowej i powszechnej* (Warsaw, 1930), pp. 15, 23.

grew darker. Already Kochanowski, eulogist of the past, was by now stating the terrifying moral downfall of the country, and comforted himself only by the thought that one generation does not yet the Nation make.[20] The propaganda of Piłsudski's camp adopted this downfall as its leitmotif. In romanticism, the Poles had their great revelation, a truly Polish idea of heroism and mission. Unfortunately—as a Sanacja ideologist had written—in the last half-century of bondage "the soul of the nation had grown lazy," and the nation itself lost its will and sense of mission.[21] It became depraved by imported ideas, alien to the Polish spirit: positivism, Marxism, parliamentary imbecility, and vulgar, tribal nationalism. Under their influence the nation had diminished and was no longer up to the greatness destined for it, to the imperative of the incarnate Word. But that word, the immortal word of the prophetic poets, is what sets the proper measure of history. The Word and the Deed, builders of Reborn Poland, are inseparable.[22]

III

This historical and romantic formula of national culture became dominant in school education in the thirties. A trace of paternalism toward the popular classes remained in it: they were to adopt as their own a tradition in the creation of which they had not participated. This is why a part of the intelligentsia sought not in history, but in the soul of the people, the true source of national culture.

The sanctification of the people also had a long, romantic genealogy behind it and was not at all specifically Polish. Folk mores were original, unspoiled by worldly refinement and corruption, hearts were sincere, and folk poetry the most genuinely native of all. This myth was hard to kill: suppressed in the positivist period, it was re-emerging again in the 1880s. In the Warsaw populist weekly *Głos*,

20. Kochanowski, *Polska*, p. 405.

21. Adam Skwarczyński, "O romantyźmie polskim," in his *Myśli o nowej Polsce* (Warsaw, 1931), p. 42.

22. Leszek Kamiński, *Romantyzm a ideologia: Główne ugrupowania polityczne Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej wobec tradycji romantycznej* (Wrocław, 1980), p. 48; Andrzej Wierzbicki, *Naród—państwo w polskiej myśli historycznej dwudziestolecia międzywojennego* (Wrocław, 1978), pp. 120–23, 132.

it had assumed the form of the theory of two separate civilizations: that of the gentry and that of the peasantry. The first one was cosmopolitan and languished with refinement. The second one was native and vital through its bond with nature and the land.[23]

The organ of the Towarzystwo Ludoznawcze (Folk-Lore Society) made its programmatic declaration that the nativeness of the people "is the source that refreshes the national spirit and keeps it pure and unblemished." And further on:

> History teaches us that the nation will not die as long as its people lives, this people which is able to revive the withered limbs of national life and instill new life into the works of its intellectual toil; when cosmopolitan truths crash against this fortress of nationality, may it be the holy endeavor of each to watch over this fortress and strengthen it.[24]

The urban intellectual (writer, artist, ethnographer) who takes to the country not only, as it had been the case before, to learn about it, describe and paint it, but to discover in it uncorrupted ethical and aesthetic values, which will revive national art, became at the turn of the century an emblematic character of cultural life. Such an encounter of two cultures, yielding new stylization, finds many literary confirmations, of which Wyspiański's ironic *Wedding* of 1901 is the best known. Yet it was in architecture that the idea of folk was subjected to the most significant test. Architects and theoreticians of art were very eager to create, or rather to discover, a "Polish style" of architecture. They looked for inspiration either to the Baltic Gothic style, or to the Classicist manors of the gentry, common since the eighteenth century. All those concepts were vanquished by Stanisław Witkiewicz, sr. and his idea of taking as model the cottages of mountaineers from the region of Zakopane. In the folk art of these mountaineers of the Tatra mountains, Witkiewicz saw a relic of the ancient art of the Polish nation, miraculously preserved in its original shape. Its traces had been lost in the lowlands, but survived in the mountains, where the destructive impact of civilization was slower in coming. The Zakopane style was thus to become a model for the

23. Jan Ludwik Popławski, in "*Głos*" *: prospekt* (1986); idem, "Dwie cywilizacje," *Głos* 7 (1886), pp. 98–100, and several other articles from 1886–1888.

24. *Lud* (1895), quoted by Wanda Paprocka, "Tradycja ludowa w myśli humanistycznej i idei narodu XIX wieku," *Etnografia Polska* 26:2 (1982), p. 54.

national style in architecture and the applied arts. Since about 1900 Witkiewicz had been energetically propagating his idea: scientific papers and architectural projects flourished, and a special publication, the Przegląd Zakopiański (Zakopane Review), was founded. The "mountaineer" fashion in furniture was promoted to ensure that everything would be "native" in the Polish home. Ruskin's influence, rustic fashion, the aesthetic renaissance of handicraft against shoddy industrial goods, all favored the folk culture mystique, but were unable to protect it from the effects of industrialization. The Zakopane style had left its mark rather in the history of ideas than in that of architecture, for it could not be applied to urban brick and stone construction.[25]

The program of the ennoblement of folklore expressed the democratic inclinations of the urban intelligentsia but, paradoxically, was rather unattractive to intelligentsia of rural origins, for whom, for example, speaking in dialect was associated with the low social status of the peasant. The aspirations of peasants who were becoming educated went rather in the direction of achieving full participation in social life and the all-national culture. Time and work were needed to convince the countryside that its regional culture forms were of value for the entire nation. This work was first undertaken by Władysław Orkan, mountaineer and writer, who instilled in the people of the mountains pride in their heritage, a regional patriotism within the framework of the national one.[26] Social advancement was not assimilation to the bland culture of the city, but in finding a practical solution of the problem of how "a civilized man to be, and yet a Polish peasant to remain."[27] Striking a balance between these two ambitions was not easy.

After 1918, peasant parties became a serious force in Polish political life. Intellectuals' interest in the country grew even greater but still, as previously, two trends could be distinguished in it. The

25. Stanisław Witkiewicz, *Listy o stylu zakopiańskim 1892–1913*, ed. Michał Jagiełło (Krakow, 1979); Mirosława Drozd-Piasecka, "Społeczne funkcje sztuki ludowej," *Etnografia Polska* 26:2 (1982), pp. 69–126; Lesław Tatarowski, *Poglądy na ludowość w czasopismiennictwie młodopolskim* (Warsaw, Wrocław, 1979); Andrzej K. Olszewski, "Przegląd koncepcji stylu narodowego w teorii architektury polskiej przełomu XIX i XX wieku," *Sztuka i Krytyka* 3–4 (1956), pp. 275–372.

26. Władysław Orkan, *Listy ze wsi i inne pisma społeczne* (Warsaw, 1948).

27. Quoted in Józef Burszta, *Chłopskie źródła kultury* (Warsaw, 1985), p. 328.

first was the intention of accelerating civilizational progress in the countryside, including it in the nation-wide circulation of cultural values. And so support was given to the foundation of rural schools, the organization of people's universities, the publication of reviews for the country public, popularizing Polish literature and history. The second approach, more literary than practical, aimed rather at sheltering the country from urban civilization and "sophisticated" knowledge: this was the cult of the peasant as original man, who had still preserved direct contact with nature and with God. The issue thus was not teaching the peasants, but deriving from them faith, wisdom, and the sense of beauty, and building on that the foundations of national culture. This, in brief, was the message of the later creative work of the poet Jan Kasprowicz, and especially of the writer Emil Zegadłowicz and the *Czartak* review he inspired, published irregularly between 1922 and 1928.[28] The idealization of the country and of primitivism was attacked by the post-modernistic avant-garde which, in the name of the struggle for modern Poland and modern art, accepted no compromise with the romantic-bucolic tradition.[29]

Compromise, however, was the only possible solution here. Franciszek Bujak characterized folk culture in Poland by stressing such of its features as the individualism of homesteaders, practical resourcefulness, a cheerful disposition, patience toward decrees of Providence, calm solemnity in the face of death, lack of deeper metaphysical interest, and furthermore "the drive toward giving beautiful shape to utensils and to objects of religious cults."[30] In his opinion contemporary folk culture was an archaic form of past national culture, arrested in its development and now decaying under the impact of the inexorable process of urbanization. In Western Europe the yeomanry had already lost its physiognomy, becoming similar to the bourgeoisie, but that physiognomy has yet been conserved, though not without losses, in Central Europe. And although some folk products, like jazz in the USA, or rugs, pots, and lace in Poland, are

28. Alina Kowalczykowa, *Programy i spory literackie w dwudziestoleciu 1918–1939*, 2nd ed. (Warsaw, 1981), pp. 150–54.

29. See Maria Janion, "Ludowość rozdwojona" in her *Odnawianie znaczeń* (Cracow, 1980), pp. 277–81.

30. Bujak, *Kultura*, p. 35.

capable of achieving popularity and markets, rural cultures are on the whole un-expansive and they lose in the clash with the culture of the higher classes. At most they may attempt to establish a certain balance of mutual influence, in order to "adapt and harmonize cultural acquisitions coming from the outside with the cultural resources (of the countryside) of yore, and in part to develop these resources in a manner which more or less parallels the development of the universal culture."[31]

In these cautious formulas it is difficult still to find the ambition of individualizing the entire national culture by imbuing it with folk, regional elements. A more radical agrarian ideology, however, was revived in the early thirties by spiritual leaders of the Union of Village Youth ("Wici") who argued that the self-emancipating rural people must preserve their own soul and not succumb to the influence of the rotten urban and commercial civilization. Thus the idea of folk character traits providing a model for the national culture was transformed from a literary fancy into the battle cry of a social movement.

IV

The nationalistic doctrine shared common origins with the theory of folk, in the same myth of nativeness of the village, but their ways soon parted. The nationalists had little interest in the beauty of folk art products.[32] What they cared about were "the deepest tribal properties of the Polish race, yet dormant in the soul of the Polish peasant."[33] The peasant was the best Pole, for he had been tied to the land for ages, did not submit to foreign influences, was pre-Slavic and pre-Aryan, and without fail felt "the call of the blood, the innate instinct of the clan," which will revive national culture.[34]

31. Ibid., p. 43.

32. In this paper I use the term "nationalism" and its derivatives in their narrower sense, current in Central and Eastern Europe, to designate a rightist ideology and social movement, born in the late nineteenth century, which demands that all social values be subordinated to what is perceived as the nation's strength and interest.

33. Władysław Kozicki's phrase of 1926, quoted by Jan Józef Lipski, "Mit rodzimości kultury (Na przykładzie recepcji Jana Kasprowicza)," in *Swojskość i cudzoziemszczyzna w dziejach kultury polskiej* (Warsaw, 1973), p. 313.

34. Jan Ludwik Popławski, *Szkice literackie i naukowe* (Warsaw, 1910), p. 363.

Nationalists were not satisfied with instincts; though they very much liked to write about them, they also stressed that what unites tribes into nations "is not the unity of race and language, but the community of spiritual ideals and of culture, of historical traditions, and material interests."[35] And from this viewpoint a great part of the Polish-speaking peasantry did not yet belong to the nation.

After 1918, the democratic component of the ideology of the National Democrats (the Endecja) was on the wane. If any of them still referred to the theory of two civilizations: of the gentry and the peasantry, it was only to argue that they converge and unite in an organic whole rooted in folk soil, from which it draws its juices of instinct and its strength. The leadership, however, belonged to the nationally conscious elite, that is, to the intelligentsia, the group that "makes for the existence of national separateness in the ranks of civilized nations. . . . It gives the nation historical inspiration, it elicits from the race the noble accents of national heroism, it creates acts of national will in moments of crisis, it leads the masses. . . ."[36] It leads the masses, which means that it has to imbue them with national self-awareness and an emotional attitude to the heritage: "The worker or the yeoman feels truly Polish only when he . . . will have known his communion with the Polish legend, with the Polish knightly rhapsody, with the Polish historical deed."[37] Such phraseology resembles the epigone romantic concept discussed earlier, but the similarity is superficial. The National Democratic concept of national culture was much more party-oriented, it directly served the task of "organizing souls." An authoritative writer had figuratively stated that "it is necessary to construct and assemble the modern dynamo-electric machine of Polish culture in such a way that it will produce a quantity of current sufficient for galvanizing the masses."[38]

Furthermore, that culture had to have a clearly national character in all of its manifestations. Roman Dmowski had written in 1901: "We are a party for which national interest, the welfare of our race, the self-contained development of our national culture constitute the

35. Ibid., p. 274.

36. Zygmunt Wasilewski, *O życiu i katastrofach cywilizacji narodowej: wstep do rozważań nad programowemi zagadnieniami doby obecnej* (Warsaw, 1921), pp. 47, 79.

37. Zdzisław Dębicki, *Podstawy kultury narodowej*,2nd ed. (Warsaw, 1925), p. 47.

38. Ibid., p. 72.

supreme measure of politics."[39] This subordination of culture to politics and considering its self-containedness as an axiom had remained a lasting trait of the doctrine. Initially the National Democratic critics still opposed national culture and supra-national, European, Latin civilization. But soon blurring that distinction they advocated the notion that each nation has a separate civilization. In 1906 Zygmunt Wasilewski maintained that each nation has a "racial eye," that is, its own concept of beauty, a separate taste.[40] He repeatedly returned to this issue: there is, he wrote, no universal art; art has to have blood, character, whatever marvelous is created is the effect of the artist's communion with the nation's collective soul.[41] Zdzisław Dębicki confirmed this assertion: there obviously are foreign influences, but supreme works of art and of thought are free of them. The great contemporary painters: Malczewski, Wyczółkowski, Wyspiański, "had expressed the Polish spirit in its supreme form, free of any foreign accretions." And Polish music? "Having Chopin and Moniuszko, can it 'internationalize' itself through Wagnerism or Skriabinism? The creative work of Polish musicians does not give rise to any apprehensions in that respect."[42] Chopin's music gives the best example of the particular understanding between artist and listener: "It may charm foreigners, but it will forever remain for them something exotic. Only a Pole will feel and understand it, for it shall thrill each fiber of his Polish soul and make it tremble."[43]

The case of science is no different. Although truth as an ideal is one, European science is still divided into national schools:

> Nationality will always leave its mark on it, for a German scientist will never have the synthetic skills and Latin clarity of a Frenchman, an Englishman will never have the quickness of mind and brilliance of a Pole, nor shall the Pole have English simplicity in expressing his galloping thoughts, or German obstinate patience and endurance in the pursuit of the goal.[44]

39. Barbara Toruńczyk, ed., *Narodowa Demokracja: Antologia myśli politycznej "Przeglądu Wszechpolskiego", 1895–1905* (Warsaw, 1981), p. 81.

40. Zygmunt Wasilewski, *Listy dziennikarza w sprawach kultury narodowej* (Lwow, 1908), pp. 116–17.

41. Wasilewski, *O życiu i katastrofach cywilizacji*, p. 39.

42. Dębicki, *Podstawy*, pp. 196–97.

43. Ibid., p. 193.

44. Ibid., p. 192.

Such sketchy portraits set aside, it is not easy to learn from these verbose texts what this structure of the Polish mentality is precisely. It is much easier to find negative characterizations of the Russian mind or the Jewish soul, for example, than an explanation of exactly what traits differentiate the Polish racial eye, ear, or brain, and their works, from all other, non-Polish ones. It was firmly held, nonetheless, that each civilization in itself constitutes (or should) a consistent, harmonious, and homogeneous whole, "from poetry to politics."[45] He who was not certain of all this deserved nothing but contempt. From the start of the century, theory of culture was the field of the most violent National Democratic polemics. Zygmunt Balicki took his aim at all cosmopolitans, positivists, socialists, Zionists, and the like who still believed in some all-human, paper "progress," always in quotation marks.[46] Wasilewski was even more blunt: "We are tired of the manner of different meshures of progressiveness which consists in debauchery, in adultery with alien civilizations, in the disregard of the national spirit."[47]

These last statements come from a time when, in the Prussian and Russian partitions, the intelligentsia of all orientations led a dogged struggle in defence of Polish language and the Polish school, and this could account for the nationalistic fever. After the recovery of independence, however, this aggressive xenophobia grew only stronger. Wasilewski, who was the National Democrats' chief authority on culture, did not cease his warnings against a danger more threatening than foreign aggression:

> When, profiting from our indolence, the alien element shall with its influence reach the innermost domains of civilization, when it shall enter the brain centers and start transforming there the cultural type, then two phenomena may occur: either, when the society's culture is poorly grounded, the soul submits to decomposition, and then native civilization falls into ruin, or, when the soul is yet healthy, a reaction occurs which makes the two different types of culture adopt a mutually hostile stance.[48]

45. Feliks Koneczny, "Czy polityka należy do cywilizacji?", *Myśl Narodowa* 57 (1931), p. 346; cf. Wasilewski, *O życiu i katastrofach cywilizacji*, p. 167.

46. Toruńczyk, ed., *Narodowa Demokracja*, pp. 100–101.

47. *meshures* is a Yiddish word for servants, here, as lackeys; Wasilewski, *Listy dziennikarza*, p. 177.

48. Idem, *O życiu i katastrofach cywilizacji*, pp. 14–15.

This "different type" is the Semitic one, of course, long working on the transformation of the ideals and way of thinking of the Polish intelligentsia. It finds collaborators among all those native individuals and organizations, especially left-wing ones, which "have directly submitted to the intellectual rule of alien elements, waging war against the Polish national civilization."[49]

As the nationalistic camp became ever more radical, cultural work was undisguisedly drawn into the service of the totalitarian project. In one of the reviews of the young nationalists, a rising critic had written:

> Culture is an instrument of mental conquest—it is the spiritual bond of the Nation, it is the consciousness of the Nation and of its historical mission. In culture national emotions are collected and united, this is where gushes the fount of enthusiasm and fanaticism, the fount of the Nation's eternal youth. . . . In art, in science, in philosophy—the authors' personality is most salient; in final account they decide the shape of national culture, they lead culture from the sources of the national myth.[50]

There was no more time left to see where they are leading it.

V

To conclude, a few reservations are necessary.

The three ideological models of national culture outlined here: the romantic-historical one, the folk-oriented one, and the nationalistic one, have in common the stress they lay not on the quality and richness of Polish culture, but on its postulated separateness, dissimilarity, and axiological consistency. This over-riding accent was what I had taken into consideration in the selection of the material, which then was used to construct the models. It is obvious, therefore, that the three types in no way exhaust the complete set of ideological stances and concepts of culture in inter-war Poland.

None of the three models is specifically Polish. What is more,

49. Ibid., pp. 15, 90, 117, 149.

50. Włodzimierz Pietrzak, "O nowoczesną kulturę narodową," *Młoda Polska* 2 (1937), quoted by Kowalczykowa, *Programy*, p. 275.

it seems that all three had been present in the mind and the political and literary writings of all European nations, though of course in different proportions. Beside everything else, one needs a rich historical tradition in order to develop the first model, a thriving folk culture to develop the second one, and only the third one is self-sufficient. These models assume greater salience in East Central European countries in the twentieth century because culture had to serve the defense of dignity and the compensation of national humiliations, and therefore arguments over its character were willingly included in party and patriotic programs. One way or the other, one could divert oneself by looking up almost identical quotations from the writings of different nations of this geo-political zone, not because publicists read and copied one another, but because similar situations gave rise to similar concepts. If common models existed, they originated mainly in France and Germany, and probably principally in respect to the third type. It has often been remarked that there is nothing less national than nationalism.

It is often difficult to ascertain, in the described doctrines, where the description of (usually mystified) current traits of the given culture ends and programmatic postulates begin. One may assert, however, that these postulates had but an insignificant impact on the customs of everyday life, and also not an impressive one on creative work. Science, literature, and the fine arts lived their own lives in Poland without paying much attention to ideological directives. These amateurish theories of culture were in fact rather uninspiring. They are nonetheless testimonies of the intellectual climate of the time.

All the described concepts were elaborated by the Polish intelligentsia, which was almost solely responsible for cultural ideas and political programs of all colors. The neo-romantic image of national culture served primarily Piłsudski's political camp (which ruled Poland after May 1926), and was predominant in school and army education. The nationalistic image was part and parcel of the Endecja's world outlook and propaganda: it appealed mainly, but by no means exclusively, to the middle classes and the clergy. The folk-enhancing image was no less an invention of writers and intellectuals, among them some of peasant origin, and only lately was it adopted by one current of the peasant movement.

In the liberal as well as left-oriented circles of the Polish intelligentsia all these concepts of exclusiveness and nativeness were met with serious resistance. The dimensions of this paper do not allow for the presentation of the history of this resistance and of alternative philosophies of culture, signed by names more important in literature and criticism than those cited in this paper. The strategies, styles, and literary genres of these polemics were very diverse: from pathos to mockery, and from philosophical treatise to poetic parody.

One general qualification must be made: in Poland (and in other countries as well), national nihilism never was the opposite of all the variants of the concept of native and closed culture. This would have been unthinkable in a nation which had so dearly paid for its right to exist. Polemics with nationalism, or the mockery of pompous and sentimental slogans, did not mean the neglect of values associated with the idea of homeland and independence. They did express, however, in various forms, the belief that the recognition of national values, or even their cult, should not limit the intellectual horizon of culture but, conversely, favor its openness to universal problems.

Translated by Konstanty Gebert

Polish National Character, the Sanacja Camp, and the National Democracy

ANDRZEJ CHOJNOWSKI

"I do not demand either your or anyone else's support. It is sometimes possible to do something for the Poles, but never together with them."

These words, which legend ascribes to Aleksander Wielopolski (1830–1877), the head of the Civil Administration in the Congress Kingdom of Poland on the eve of the January Uprising, 1863, can serve as a motto for reflections on the mentality of the Polish political elite in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is characteristic that this elite produced many persons who wished to win power and spiritual governance in society but, at the same time, represented a very critical, or outright reluctant, attitude toward it. The Polish leaders, who were the quintessence of stereotyped Polishness, frequently made it known that they did not hold their nation in high regard and, even worse, did not understand its reactions. They felt offended by their countrymen and discussed with pleasure their shortcomings or, in a high-handed fashion, offered advice.

These didactic inclinations emerged in very concrete historical circumstances. Polish political life in the nineteenth century was shaped under the shattering impress of the loss of independence. The first half of that century was dominated by a conviction that fate could be relatively quickly changed if the whole national energy be used for the preparation of an armed struggle. As in the words of the song composed in 1797 (and now the national anthem) "that which an alien force seized, we shall at sword-point retrieve." This was an ideology of deed, which led toward a rather thoughtless approval for every form of military act.

Only when the efforts of the consecutive uprisings proved to be unsuccessful did the time come for more serious reflections con-

cerning the circumstances of the Partitions, and of the correctness of the conduct pursued up to 1863. An inspiring role in these deliberations was played by the authors of Polish scientific historiography, which emerged in the 1870s. The solution to the question about the downfall of the Polish state in the eighteenth century became the prime axis of a controversy between historians representing the so-called Cracow and Warsaw schools. The former traced the reasons for the loss of independence to the faults within the system of the Commonwealth and to the political and moral degeneration of the gentry society; the latter—to the aggressive policy pursued by Poland's neighbors. These controversies contained also the issue of the evaluation of Polish national vices and virtues. It was precisely such Cracow historians as Jósef Szujski and Michał Bobrzyński who formulated the theory of the "lack of character," asserting that during the most critical moments Poland lacked leaders with strong personalities, and that the general public was soft and unwilling to embark upon a struggle; these features were supposed to have been the outcome of the absence of religious wars in the pre-Partition Commonwealth.

The discussions of the historians were soon taken over by the political groups that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century. The debates concerning the condition of the nation had a very practical meaning—for their leaders they were supposed to provide a solution to the question whether the Poles were at all capable of winning independence. This was not a purely rhetorical query since under the influence of the depression generated by the failure of the January Uprising, there appeared in Poland voices which called for abandoning illusory hopes about liberty.

On the map of Polish politics, whose contours began to be outlined in the 1880s, the greatest importance was attached to two trends. The first, National Democracy, attracted followers of the nationalist ideology. The second was the extremely differentiated socialist movement from whose ranks came Józef Piłsudski, undoubtedly the most outstanding Polish leader in the first half of the twentieth century.

The process of nation-forming in East Europe was accomplished under different conditions and much later than was the case in the western part of the continent. The liquidation of rural feudal rela-

tions and mass-scale industrialization took place in the Polish lands as late as the end of the nineteenth century when the peasants and the proletariat began gradually to participate in public life. Thus, there appeared conducive conditions for expanding national consciousness into new social groups. This task called for other methods of acting, however. Romanticism, which previously ruled over the minds of the Polish leading elites, also wished to draw forth people to the national issue, but was unable to go further than dreams and incantations. The leaders of the National Democracy rejected this utopianism and replaced it with the slogan of everyday political work in society.

The goal of this work was primarily to ingrain into all the strata of society the feeling of belonging to a single community, and to instill an awareness that the interest of this community is of supreme value. Roman Dmowski, the chief ideologue of the National Democrats, wrote that the object of patriotism

> or, to put it more precisely, of nationalism is not a certain collection of freedoms which used to be called the fatherland, but the nation itself, as a live social organism which possesses its own culture, needs, and interests upon the basis of a racially and historically developed spiritual distinctness. It consists of an attachment to national individuality, to language, culture, tradition, the understanding of the requirements of the nation as a whole, a unification with its interests. Its role does not end at the more or less distant moment of regaining independence—this latter is only a stage beyond which work and struggle go on, using new instruments and new weapons. Here the individual does not appear only as involved in a struggle for freedom—his main target is the expansion of the scope of national life, the multiplication of the material and spiritual goods of the nation, and winning for the whole society, to which he belongs, the highest possible place among other peoples.[1]

The nationalists, therefore, believed that society could not rest content with winning concrete political victories, and, in the Polish instance, with restoring independence. The fundamental aim was a constant internal development of the nation, of its economy, culture, and art of governing so that it could face the harsh principles

1. Roman Dmowski, *Myśli nowoczesnego Polaka* (Warsaw, 1934), p. 93.

of competition in the world, in the course of which some subjugate others.

The leaders of the National Democracy formulated the principles of a new ethics which should be observed by the Poles, an ethics of "national egoism" which expressed the spirit of combat, since nations "who cease to struggle become morally degenerate and disintegrate." They also gave the concept of morality a new scope: "The morality of a nation is nothing more than its policy in relation to other nations. . . . The policy of evil is immoral . . . The nation, as a live organism, has the moral right to develop. . . at the cost of other nations."[2]

Those statements made by Zygmunt Balicki were supplemented by Dmowski, who ridiculed the existing Polish way of thinking about politics, which needed fairy tales with a happy ending that taught that "virtue is always rewarded and vice is punished." This criticism served to justify remarks on the necessity of re-evaluating national traits.

The founders of the new political movement believed that the activity of Polish society was completely insufficient in relation to its needs. The nineteenth century, after all, brought not only the failure of all the uprisings, but also permanent alterations within the Polish ethnic area. Beyond the Bug river the influence of Polish culture upon the Lithuanian, Belorussian, and Ukrainian population changed. Even more serious losses were noted in the Prussian partition area. Upper Silesia resisted Germanization rather effectively, but Polishness clearly receded in Lower Silesia, Varmia, and Mazuria and in the region of the Noteć river.

All those processes were considered by the leaders of the National Democracy as a loud alarm signal, and they saw the reasons for the failures in the inertia and slothfulness of the Poles. Referring to the theory of "lack of character," expressed by the historians of the Cracow school, Jan Ludwik Popławski noted: "Today we are the most well behaved, most humanitarian nation and most tolerant for others, believing that those properties are testimony of our civilizational nature. Unfortunately, they are not features of the masters of civilization but of its lackeys. National ruthlessness, roughness,

2. Zygmunt Balicki, *Egoizm narodowy wobec etyki* (Lwów, 1902), p. 39.

violence, and so forth did not hinder the English, Germans, and the French in winning prime positions; on the contrary, they helped them to advance in civilization. A nation which feels its independence strongly and which holds its dignity in high regard cannot be either meek nor sluggishly humanitarian."[3]

The National Democrats maintained that the national mentality could change due to the appearance of the masses on the scene of public life. This is not to say that they regarded any of the social strata as the model carrier of the positive traits of Polish national character. They did consider the peasantry to be closest to this ideal, however, and a group which possessed the greatest reserve of vital forces and which was the least contaminated by foreign impact. A careful observation of this group compelled them to admit that the "primary mass of the nation, the rural population, still uneducated and passive, is making its first steps in the domain of active participation in national politics, and although the behavior of its nationally conscious part makes it feasible to build splendid hopes upon this basis, only a rash inclination towards lauding premature victories can assume that tomorrow its main mass will be politically set into motion."[4]

The ethical ideals launched by the National Democrats were opposed by the socialist movement, which emerged in the 1880s. Its ideologues claimed that the nature of individual and group welfare was identical. The negative aspects of group morality are the consequence of the fact that social groups do not consider themselves obliged to observe the same principles which are believed to be obligatory for the individual. This process occurs when the economic system is based on exploitation and inequality in all fields of life. In the Polish situation there appeared still another factor: the Partitions not only contributed to the deviation of the country's economic and political life, but resulted in the deformation of the entire social evolution.

The destructive impact of bondage on the mentality of Polish society was strongly accented by Józef Piłsudski, one of the leaders of the Polish Society party from 1894. The need for a struggle for

3. Jastrzębiec [J. L. Popławski], "Z całej Polski", *Przegląd Wszechpolski* 2 (1896), p. 35.

4. Narodowiec [R. Dmowski], "W naszym obozie", *Przegląd Wszechpolski* 7 (1901), p. 424.

independence was for him conditioned equally by political factors as by the need for moral purification. In a letter to his friend, Feliks Perl, Piłsudski wrote: "I fight and shall die only because I cannot live in the privy which is our life, this offends me—do you hear—offends me, a person with a dignity which is not that of a slave. . . . I wish to win, but without a struggle and a sharp one at that I am not even a wrestler but simply an animal, beaten with a stick or whipped. . . . I myself, who have been described as a noble socialist, and a man about whom even his enemies will not say anything ugly, . . . want to stress the bitter truth that in a society that is unable to fight for its own sake, which shrinks from every blow struck at its face, people must perish even in that which is not lofty, beautiful, and great."[5]

In the writings of Piłsudski from the turn of the century the most copious are his reflections on the tactics of the socialist movement and descriptions of the functioning of Russian absolute rule. At the same time Piłsudski showed various examples of the way in which the Russian system ruined Polish social and intellectual life and made it barren.

Political changes in Europe which predicted the possibility of an armed conflict on a wider scale enlivened Polish political movements, forcing them to embark upon further deliberations and the modification of existing program principles. "Not peace but the sword is brought by the first quarter of the twentieth century. . . . Emancipation or dispersion throughout the world and destruction will be our snare depending on whether we shall produce force, and whether in accordance with our national interest we shall place it in a suitable moment onto the scales of events," wrote Władysław Studnicki in 1910.[6]

Dmowski's *Niemcy, Rosja, i kwestia polska* (Germany, Russia, and the Polish Question), published in 1908, was an attempt to define desired social behavior in case of a conflict. The author questioned the existing canons of Polish political thought, in accordance with which the perpetrator and the main power interested in retaining the partition of Poland was Russia. Without changing his negative attitude towards the Tsarist Empire whose civilizational status he held

5. Józef Piłsudski, *Pisma zbiorowe*, vol. 2 (Warsaw, 1937), p. 299.
6. Władysław Studnicki, *Sprawa polska* (Poznań, 1910), p. 7.

in contempt, Dmowski maintained that the Russians proved to have been too weak culturally, morally, and numerically to impose their ideals upon the other nations of the Empire. This is why the Poles did not have to fear the impact of the spirit of Moscow, and Russification ceased to be a real threat, although much time would be needed to obliterate all the traces of Russian presence in the Polish lands. It is interesting that Dmowski perceived those traces more in the material than in the spiritual side of life. The wish to become a high-ranking police official in independent Poland was also characteristic. The Russians turned Warsaw into a center of a "gubernia" and Dmowski intended to make it "clean and orderly," worthy of being the capital of the country.[7]

The main threat for the Polish question was discerned by Dmowski to be in German policy. He was disturbed by the growth of the power of that state which, in his opinion, strove towards destroying Polishness both in its own area of the Partition and, indirectly, in the two remaining ones. While sounding the alarm over the Germanization campaign, Dmowski did not conceal his admiration for Germany, for its political and, more important, civilizational superiority, and he treated German mobility as an example for the Poles.

Dmowski proposed to his countrymen that they change their way of thinking and replace romantic dreams, which in the nineteenth century were expressed in successive uprisings and in 1905 by access to the Russian Revolution, by a policy of realism. His work contained scattered remarks on the political primitivism of the Polish society, and he mentioned its "herd-like" character with a certain dose of contempt.

On the one hand, Dmowski wished to instill the ability of levelheaded calculation into Poles, the capacity for daily work in order to increase national property. On the other hand, he considered inertia to be the essential feature of the Polish character and deliberated on the methods of overcoming it. When one rejected social radicalism, as well as a program for a new insurrection, methods for inspiring national mobility remained limited. One may presume that the role of one such method was supposed to have been played by anti-Semitism, which on the eve of World War II began to play an in-

7. Andrzej Micewski, *Roman Dmowski* (Warsaw, 1971), p. 50.

creasingly important part in the program and activity of the National Democracy.

The leaders of the camp counted on the fact that the anti-Jewish propaganda campaign, conducted on a wider scale after 1912, would contribute to increasing the battle spirit of Polish society. They were also concerned with separating society from outside influence that they regarded as harmful for the moral and cultural condition of the nation. This idea became one of the most important elements of National Democratic thought. "National policy," wrote Dmowski in 1913, "must guard over the composition of the nation as regards origin, it must not allow it to be flooded by too great a number of alien elements, which introduce their instincts, attachments, concepts, and beliefs. . . . Otherwise, the nation is threatened with losing its integral existence, with a disintegration of its national spirit, and a paralysis of its self-knowledge—the greatest blow to its independence."[8]

During the 1905 Revolution the Polish socialist movement underwent serious changes. The most important one was the split within the Polish Socialist party caused by differences of opinion over the reconciliation of the slogans of a social revolution and of national liberation. Piłsudski himself gradually reduced his activity in the party and began creating in Galicia para-military detachments which were to constitute the core of a Polish army in case of a European armed conflict.

Piłsudski relied on the fact that in favorable international circumstances the example of his small armed forces would be capable of inspiring wider circles of Polish society. After the outbreak of the war in August 1914, however, when detachments of riflemen from Galicia entered into the Kingdom of Poland, calling for a joint struggle against Russia at the side of the Central Powers, their instigations failed. The population received them with icy silence, and sometimes even with outright hostility.

The leaders of the National Democracy regarded the August events as proof of the political reasonableness of the nation, and of the effectiveness of Dmowski's efforts which propagated the thought that since the Germans were the main enemy of the Polish question,

8. Roman Dmowski, *Dzieła* (Częstochowa, 1939), vol. 9, p. 38.

the Poles should treat Russia as a tactical ally. For the followers of Piłsudski the August incident was a great shock, which gave rise to a conviction that the majority of the society was totally indifferent toward the question of independence. "It was not our fault," said Piłsudski, "that our sword was small and unworthy of such a great, twenty-million strong nation. We did not have the nation behind us and the nation did not have the courage to look the gigantic events in the face, but waited in passive 'neutrality' for some sort of a 'guarantee' from someone."[9]

Piłsudski conducted a complicated game and sought to broaden the political hinterland. He toned down the critical accents in his statements about the behavior of the society. His supporters from the Legions group took more emotional and therefore more open attitudes. The feeling of disillusionment slowly transformed itself into a conviction about the exceptional character of their own milieu. They felt themselves to be an avant-garde, the moral elite of a nation which proved to be passive and worthless, apart from being worthy of contempt. The words of the "March of the First Brigade," the anthem of the Piłsudski followers, expressed their attitude quite openly: "We do not want your approval / Nor your speeches nor your purses / The time for knocking at your hearts / Has passed . . . ."

The year 1918 brought the Polish state back on the European map and this was no easy return. For the next few years Poland was to conduct a war for its frontiers, and to struggle with fundamental economic problems. All those issues called for the mobilization of the efforts of the whole society. The hope that independence would bring an end to internal strife and lead to national unity did not come true. Divergent political camps strove fervently toward imposing their own solutions, and the leaders who were able to raise themselves over party or local particularisms constituted a small group. In moments of special peril, for example, when the Bolshevik armies were approaching Warsaw in August 1920, society was capable of closing its ranks, but on a daily basis the shortcomings often ascribed to Poles made themselves known: "An inclination to garrulity, an oversensitive reflectiveness and hyper-criticism, a frequent absence of the instinct of discipline and the inability to subject one's own opin-

9. Józef Piłsudski, *Pisma zbiorowe*, vol. 4, p. 40.

ion to someone else's decision; differentiation in the name of slight divergencies."[10] Poland is dominated, Piłsudski wrote, "by an easy mobilization and an equally easy de-mobilization, a talent for short-lived enthusiasm, a lack of determination and character in attaining planned goals; a universal, especially among the intelligentsia, neurasthenia and nervous weakness. . . . The cause of this phenomenon is rooted undoubtedly in the properties of the Polish nature, incapable of long-term, calm efforts, in the weak characters of individuals, who are anxious to liquidate their ideological obligations at the first encountered difficulty."[11]

These faults of Polish society were perceived also by Roman Dmowski, still the main antagonist of Piłsudski. Although Dmowski acknowledged that the propaganda campaign of the National Democracy had so far brought substantial results, he considered its continuation as a prime task, more important than the eventual capturing of power. In contrast to many of his followers, Dmowski wished for the National Democrats primarily to "govern the soul," to dominate the minds of the society, and to change its mentality. The assumption of state institutions was to be as if a natural crowning of this process. Dmowski doubted whether his camp was capable of taking over power simply because of "the weakness of human material" which he had noticed. "One cannot go far with the staff which we have today," he wrote in 1922.[12] In June 1926, after the coup d'etat of Piłsudski, Dmowski added: "One must place valor, which is able to keep *sang froid* and a clear mind in the most difficult moments, over loquacity and expediency in dealings. One must have higher regard for responsibility and discipline than for eloquence in sterile discussions. Such a selection of people will be difficult. Not many will remain among the front line, not many . . . new ones will be found; the majority of people will have to be created."[13]

The Obóz Wielkiej Polski (The Camp of Great Poland), a supraparty organization created at the end of 1926, was supposed to have been an instrument for transforming the consciousness of society. During the founding convention Dmowski argued that from the mo-

10. *Pod znakiem odpowiedzialności i pracy. Dziesięć wieczorów* (Warsaw, 1933), p. 38.
11. Ibid., pp. 40–41.
12. Andrzej Micewskii, *Dmowski*, p. 282.
13. Roman Dmowski, "Potrzeba nowego dobra," *Słowo Polskie*, June 12, 1926.

ment of regaining their independence, the Poles did not demonstrate unity and continuity of thought and a consistent plan of action, and this is why in many respects the nation receded rather than progressed. The fundamental condition for the Republic to become a permanent institution was to organize the nation in such a way that it would become capable of transforming its collective will into deed, and of becoming the master of its own fate. "Only an organized nation can place in the foreground of the life of the country those values that constitute the basis of social being and the progress of civilization, which elevate people morally and show them something loftier than material goods, factors which bind them into a single social whole and which admonish them to place the welfare of the whole above all else."[14]

When Dmowski and other leaders of the Camp of Great Poland demanded discipline from society, the recognition of the authority of the leaders, the observance of Catholic content in intellectual and moral life, they did not differ much from the postulates of other political groups. What distinguished the National Democracy was an increasing absolutization of the category of "the national community," which gradually took on a mystic nature.

Polish nationalism in inter-war Poland changed its appearance. It was no longer concerned, as at the turn of the century, with defending the existing state of affairs. New currents in the National Democracy called for a transition to an offensive. The nation was to reveal its greatness by way of the construction of a power-state which would include all Polish lands "today under foreign rule."[15] In reality, these far-reaching and megalomaniac claims were replaced by slogans endowing the Republic, whose population within the frontiers of that period was thirty percent non-Polish, with a thoroughly national appearance.

The question of the national minorities became the main object of interest on the part of the nationalist camp. It spoke openly about the need for polonizing Ukrainians and Belorussians and demanded the removal of Germans from Poland. A special place was assigned to the Jewish issue. National Democratic propaganda presented the

14. [Roman Dmowski], *Zagadnienie rządu* (Warsaw, 1926).
15. *Akademik*, May 1, 1926.

Jew as a synonym for capitalist exploitation and dishonest usury, and as a perfidious rival at the place of work. But the struggle with the Jews was, above all, to cleanse the Polish spirit of all culturally and ideologically alien influence. Not only was Communism regarded as one of these but also liberal values, utilized by the Jews in order to reinforce their hidden power over the Poles. "Progress, science, democracy," proclaimed a leaflet of one of the extreme wings of the National Democracy in 1917, "all that sounds beautiful. But what does it conceal? A horrible Jewish spirit. And that ugly bludgeoning from which you shrink, is in reality a beautiful struggle for freeing the nation from Jewish bonds."[16] This contention, one must add, constituted the greater part of the activity pursued by the National Democrats in the 1930s.

The stand taken by Piłsudski in the first stage of independence was characterized by a symptomatic rift. In 1917 he soberly estimated that many generations would be needed for Polish society to become a society of citizens, and for a total overcoming of the effects of bondage. After November 1918 he seemed to have rapidly forgotten his own words and impatiently expected that the regaining of statehood would immediately set free in the nation the most noble reactions and habits. He maintained that the time had come to cancel old accounts and to go beyond particular claims and images from the past.

At the same time, Piłsudski, who called for national consolidation, forced through his own conceptions with which political opponents obviously did not wish to agree. The conclusions which he drew were the same as in 1914: once again the nation proved to be immature, petty, unworthy of a historical opportunity, and was only saved thanks to the sacrifice made by the best few.

In Piłsudski's memory the 1918–1922 period gradually turned into a chain of constant disappointments. "I am a man," he recalled later on, "who experienced 1918. At that time . . . I talked with people for twenty hours on end, with this one, that one, the third, and the fiftieth one, unable to reconcile anybody with anyone else, and without the possibility of bringing two persons together for the purpose of cooperation. . . . I repeat, it was enough to live through 1918 to

16. Szymon Rudnicki, *Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny* (Warsaw, 1985), p. 303.

become disgusted about talking to Poles, and to say to oneself that it is impossible to talk with a Pole. I repeat that I regard as one of the miracles of my work that I was able to find my way in such chaos and to force Poland to make her first steps as a state. . . . This was such an exhausting task that I had created many beautiful words and definitions which will remain after my death and which will place Poland and her nation among idiots."[17]

In summing up his arguments, Piłsudski described the Polish nation as weak, incapable of independent thought, easily submissive to foreign domination—all told less valuable in comparison with other nations.

Piłsudski's lack of faith in the state-creative talents of the Poles was to have essential consequences for the development of the domestic situation. In May 1926 Piłsudski resorted to arms in order to seize power, using the argument about the need to set aright the inefficient state-political institutions and the purification of society's morality. During the successive months he devoted much energy to prove how far the demoralization of public life in Poland had progressed. His opinions about the national faults of the Poles were often very sharp but as the head of the state he did not draw equally far-reaching conclusions.

Piłsudski severely criticized Polish society but did not strive towards its total subjugation. After the coup d'etat he did not introduce a full dictatorship, and retained the Parliament, voting rights, and civic liberties. The choice of this philosophy of governance was influenced by an excellent acquaintance with Polish mentality. In reality, and contrary to rhetoric, Piłsudski did not intend to "purify" the Polish national character. He was capable, on the other hand, of exploiting some of its features—emotionality, changeable moods, and a superficiality of ideological and world outlook choices as well as egocentrism—in order to seduce society and to dominate its moods. He treated the Poles, therefore, as less difficult to tame than they usually believed themselves to be, and as a result, considered it unnecessary to apply drastic methods of government.

Piłsudski's pragmatic attitude contrasted with that of his coworkers who accented much more strongly the tasks of bringing

17. Józef Piłsudski, *Pisma zbiorowe*, vol. 9, p. 88.

up society, which faced the Sanacja camp. The transformation of society's mentality was supposed to be gradual, and to be conducted by the same people who alone were not compromised during the struggle for independence. In this manner, the elite of the nation took over, in the opinion of the Piłsudski group, the right to govern and to decide in the name of the immature and corrupt nation about the essence of the Polish raison d'etre.

The Piłsudski followers also maintained that the carriers of the positive traits of the Polish national character were not members of a single social stratum, but a formation which had shaped its ethos in the course of the struggle for independence. Attempts were made to adapt this ethos, in which an important place was assigned to the concept of "service," to the new situation, by endowing the Sanacja camp with a form of an extensive conglomerate of various social forces—from landowners and the bourgeoisie to the peasants and the proletariat—capable of subordinating their particular interests to the supreme interest of the state.

The political philosophy of the Piłsudski group, therefore, was anti-egalitarian, and legionnaire. The idea of democracy, treated as a conscious support of the average man, was contrasted with the conception of inequality, which stems from individual merits. In the course of time the Piłsudski followers tried to express their views in terms of solutions within the system. This process contained also a rather practical element—deprived of the charisma and authority enjoyed by Piłsudski, his supporters feared that without suitable legal guarantees they could find themselves, after his death, relegated to the margin of political life.

In 1933 Walery Sławek, the leading Sanacja politician, proposed that power in the state be handed over to a civic elite, chosen according to moral criteria. This elite was to be composed of the recipients of the highest Polish state medals—the Virtuti Militari and the Independence Cross—in other words, of those who "made an effort for the sake of honor and the state to an extent exceeding those of the average man."[18] Certain elements of this proposal inspired the new Constitution, which was passed in April 1935. The electoral suffrage

18. Andrzej Chojnowski, *Piłsudszycy u władzy. Dzieje Bezpartyjnego Bloku Współpracy z Rządem* (Warsaw, 1986), p. 261.

accepted at that time considerably restricted the rights enjoyed by the citizens: active voting rights to the Senate were now given only to several hundred thousand persons but according to the previous ordinance they would have been enjoyed in 1935 by about thirteen million persons.

Discussions concerning the national character of the Poles appeared against the backdrop of inquiries into the fall of the state in the eighteenth century and the paths towards regaining independence. The strict estimates of Polish mentality, formulated at the end of the nineteenth century by numerous political writers and thinkers, expressed disagreement with the visions disseminated by literature written for the purpose of "lifting the hearts," according to which the fault for national misfortune lay with inimical history or blind fate. The open proclamation of the bitter truth was to play a cleansing role and to stir the Poles from their lethargic self-contentment. This was also the reason why critical opinions about Polish national traits appeared prior to 1918 in the declarations of the majority of politicians and leaders who supported the pro-independence current.

After the regaining of independence there appeared the question of a system which would be most suitable for Polish conditions. The original universal fascination with parliamentary democracy soon appeared to be superficial and short-lived, and was replaced by a criticism of that system. At the same time, once again the various faults of Polish society were revealed, especially anarchy and irresponsibility for the fate of the state. Opinions of this sort were by no means the domain of a single political camp. They were expressed by conservatives and socialists, National Democrats and the Piłsudski supporters, while one of the best-known peasant politicians, Wincenty Witos, went as far as to say that democracy in Poland was a misplaced idea, "owing to which a peasant from Polesie, who lived in the forests and bogs, and who never in his entire life saw anything of the outside world and often had no concept of it at all, now, at a single moment, becomes entitled to make independent decisions. . . about the future of the state on a par with a university professor."[19]

From the time when power in Poland was seized during a coup d'etat carried out by the Sanacja camp, other political trends were,

19. Wincenty Witos, *Czasy i ludzie* (Tarnów, 1926), p. 52.

as if automatically, forced to turn into defenders of parliamentary democracy even against their will. Only the Piłsudski group were interested in upholding the discussion about the Polish national character and they turned severe criticism of Polish irresponsibility, anarchy, and other traits ascribed to Polish society into an argument justifying the dictatorial government of Piłsudski. It is characteristic that the prime rival of the Sanacja camp, the National Democracy, whose leaders prior to 1918 accented the need to reform Polish mentality, after 1926 clearly opted for the populist stand. The National Democratic journalists praised the achievements and features of the Polish nation, while explaining all evil in the state in accordance with the "conspiracy theory of history," by referring to various dark forces—the Jews, Masons, Protestants, and so forth—which work against the interests of Catholic Poland.

Discussions concerning the virtues and vices of the Poles became less frequent since they were a form of controversy about the past, and about which of the political camps proved to have been wiser and more correct in indicating a path leading to independence. Meanwhile, in Poland of the 1930s the newer generations were becoming more absorbed in current problems of the developing state than in recalling the no longer topical issues of the past. Polish life began to alter and the traditional political divisions were being replaced by new configurations. The war put a halt to this evolution. The events of 1939 and subsequently the 1944–1945 period once again posed the question: did Poles become the tragic victims of history or of their own incapability?

"What Are We Like?": National Character and the Aesthetics of Distinction in Interwar Czechoslovakia

ANDREW LASS

> The question of our national character became particularly acute in October 1918. There is no question that the destinies of this nation cannot be permanently secured by the best of political alliances alone. In the end, they are directly dependent on the attributes and capabilities hidden in our national character.
>
> Ferdinand Peroutka[1]

The proposition that "national character" plays a pivotal role in the political destiny of a nation demands serious examination. What does it mean? The expression, "Czech national character," is as meaningful in English as in the original *(česká národní povaha)*, no different from the expression "American national character." Yet, do they make the same sense? At the risk of oversimplification, it could be said that while the existence of a "typically American" approach to life may be a viable topic of conversation, it certainly is not a major preoccupation of the American intelligentsia nor of central importance in daily interaction nor in the legitimization of political rule. The opposite can be argued to be the case in Central and Eastern Europe. Indeed, as far as the Czech nation is concerned, it was an important ingredient in the genesis of political alliances and ideological debates in the final decades of the nineteenth century and, even more so, during the years of Czechoslovak independence between the two world wars. Even after "scientific Communism" took

I wish to thank the organizers of the symposium for offering me the opportunity to give serious thought to a timely topic, and I am particularly grateful to Prof. Katherine Verdery and Prof. Michael Herzfeld for their insightful and helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper.

1. Ferdinand Peroutka, *Jací jsme* (Praha, 1934), p. 7.

over the center stage after 1948, the motif of "national character" never quite disappeared from the common toolbox of explanations for the status quo. The hegemonic ideology followed the Soviet example (that is, nationalism was a byproduct of bourgeois capitalism now defeated by the victorious proletariat) and stayed away from the discredited racial and cultural theories that had marked Nazi policy. Yet, everyday rhetoric continued to refer to "typical" behavior of distinct cultural groups, and many instances of policy implementations were clearly partial in this way as well: in one way or another, discrimination against the traditional "others" continued (for example, the anti-Semitism of the Communist purges in the 1950s, deliberate suppression of the Gypsy, Ruthenian, or Hungarian "problems," claims and denials regarding the unequal development of the Czech and Slovak lands, and so forth). Most importantly, however, the Czechs' view of themselves as "scared, passive yet cunning, and forever practical beer drinkers" prevailed in the all-pervasive philosophy of everyday life commonly referred to as the "pragmatism of the small Czech" (*pragmatismus malého českého člověka*). It remains to be seen whether, and to what extent, the theme of "national character" will reemerge as nationalism, racism, and intense localism threaten to become the true legacies of the "velvet revolution" of November 1989.[2]

At first one is tempted to shed some light on the matter by making a clear distinction between studies devoted to the "scientific" observation of particular characteristics of populations and those sources in which the topic of "national character" serves an obvious ideological purpose. While the former "culture and personality" studies can be said to establish the existence of ethnic identity on the firm grounds of objective observation, the latter presume such an existence: an appreciation of national character is an essential part of a society's understanding of its past, present, and future. On second thought, this distinction between the "scientific" and the "native" point of view is of dubious value, at least in the context of the present study. For example, the anthropologists Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict are best remembered for their pioneering work in the

2. The shifts in attitudes towards minorities and foreigners in the first "post-revolutionary" year is the topic of a separate, unpublished 1991 study, V. Hubinger and A. Lass, "Memory and Violence in the Aftermath of the Czechoslovak 'Velvet Revolution.' "

cross-cultural study of personality. Heirs to the "historical particularism" of Franz Boas, their aim was to demonstrate the particular (read social and historical) causation behind cultural types. In this sense, too, they were advocating an anti-racial, anti-"nature" explanation of human diversity. At first glance, this is what sets their "scientific" approach apart from the "native," ideologically motivated arguments. Yet most of the Czech materials from the interwar period are certainly written and intended as serious, scientific, contributions to history, social psychology, and social policy. The social psychologist and philosopher Emanuel Chalupný, for example, was quite adamant about the importance of a scientific explanation of the German national character for the development of a "Czechoslovak national philosophy." He complained, in 1933, that the resistance of official culture to the understanding of these truths was but a further example "of the incredible power of suggestion that the neighboring Germans held over our nation."[3] Hitlerism, in his view, was but the clearest example of the teutonic mind, and one could only hope that the study of characterology "of one's own nation and of the other nations settled in this state or otherwise important" become an essential component in the preparation of the intelligentsia and the educators of the future.[4]

> The final question remains: What other damages and catastrophes must happen to our state before this necessary reform takes place and before its effects are felt in practical politics?[5]

Clearly, then, it is important to view the "scientific" aspect of these debates in terms of the legitimacy that they provided for a socially valued prejudice.[6] Such rhetoric makes the next step—the formulation and application of social policy—a short and logical one as a theory of history becomes actualized as cultural practice.

It is certainly the case that the set of typifications that are commonly made as people observe and judge the behavior of others, the normative rules that inform an individual's own social conformity

3. Emanuel Chalupný, *Povaha evropských národů, zejmena Němců*. (Praha, 1935), p.lxi.

4. Chalupný, *Povaha*, p.lxxviii.

5. Chalupný, *Povaha*, p.lxxviii.

6. Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* was similarly motivated by the idea that the understanding of the Japanese national character would help the war effort.

and that are so often couched in terms of "we do (or do not do) it this way," are expressions that assert, directly or indirectly, a national character. It is hard not to see that, for the most part, other people have other ways. Yet, very much like the anthropologists' struggling to locate and define "culture," any attempt to come to grips with the phenomenon's objectivity is impeded from the outset by other distinctions. For example, if national character is a matter of individual behavior, how do we account for it, where lies the difference between its etiology and that of, let us say, neuroses? Do nations really have distinct psychologies? If Czechs have a national character that is argued to have been behind many a historical event, does this imply that Czechs also behaved "typically" and "distinctly" in the Middle Ages? The answer to this last question is riddled with contradictions; some have argued that national character transcends the contingencies of history (which it may explain), in which case it is hard to see where lies its "nationality" (a historically determinate state of affairs), or why the *victorious* Hussite movement in the fifteenth century rather than the *loss* of the Battle at the White Mountain in 1620, best exemplifies this "quality." And if all that can be said is that national character is a "condition" of the historical circumstance that the Czechs have found themselves in (the terms of cause and effect are now reversed), then not only is there nothing transcendent guiding the people, there may not be anything particularly distinct about them either.

When I question the objectivity of "national character" I do not wish to argue that national character does not exist. On the contrary, in maintaining that it is socially constructed and therefore historically traceable, I wish to emphasize that as a narrative genre deeply imbedded in the social structure that it reflects and serves, "national character" is a discursive practice essential to the politics of hegemony and, as such, has its own intellectual history. Such are its foundations, too, as a real experience. The topic reappears time and again in common speech and official rhetoric, through direct investigation or mere allusion, and serves not only as a mode of explanation but as a recognizable set of qualities that characterize actual events and command their classification as well as that of the actors involved.

When we are speaking about those interpretations of conduct that produce and affirm actions and their concomitant subjects and objects that are institutionalized because the interpretation is oft repeated and accepted, we are speaking of "discursive practices."[7]

Not merely a matter of speaking, national character is expressed and, most importantly, perceivable. Such expressions in historical events, human interaction, language, food, or architecture, for example, are recognized in either positive or negative terms as desirable or objectionable qualities, they and the response that they provoke are clearly acts of social judgement that distinguish "us" from "them" as one distinguishes good taste from bad. This discursive practice, like all others, is therefore a fundamentally controlling one wherein social and cultural values are transposed into a currency of perceptual qualities and constituted as an aesthetics of distinction. We may speak of the "aesthetic" not only because these qualities are said to be perceivable by the senses. It is an aesthetic in a social sense as well: inherently critical, the judgement of taste is a judgement of social distinction.

Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar, in which their position in the objective classifications is expressed or betrayed.[8]

There is, however, another essential ingredient to the aesthetic, as Bourdieu points out. While the classifications are social judgements, their expressions are "purely sensual." As is best demonstrated in the domains of "pure Art," it is precisely because the aesthetic is taken to be a matter of "form" and evaluated in terms of the experiences of beauty or perfection that the aesthetic qualities are given a transcendental status: in other words, social classifications are marked by style, but style is experienced as having sensual, universal qualities thereby denying its relative social validity and, simultaneously,

7. Michael J. Shapiro, *Language and Political Understanding: The Politics of Discursive Practices* (New Haven, 1981), p. 130.

8. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction. A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge, Mass., 1984), p. 6.

placing such expression within the domain of ethics. Like particular culinary treats, which are classified as typically Czech and therefore good tasting, particular historical events are said to exemplify aspects of the national character since they are expressions of such typical yet universal qualities as "humaneness."[9]

The efficacy of this discursive practice is enhanced by the fact that as a meaningful experience, "national character" is given primary semantic locus in the individual. Just as the monuments and countryside give historical depth to the nation as a geopolitical entity and thus constitute a cultural world that is external to the individual and "there" for him or her to "inhabit," so too the corporeal Self is constituted as having cultural (read "national") and historical depth. Physique, gesture, personal habit and, most of all, speech become an integral part of the individual's spatio-temporal horizon. Continuously reinforced through the fabric of social interaction, this "body politic" also helps establish and reinforce the social order. A discourse—initially encountered as abstract and elitist—finds its fulfillment in the interpretation and mutual control of individual agency which, in turn, is recognized and therefore constituted as "typically national."

It is worth exploring the possibility that national character, like other qualities that are made to characterize an emerging nation's distinct culture, is something akin to style, that has its history and that is part of the basic shifts in the organization of a society entering the modern, capitalist world order. Within the disourse itself, of course, national character is one of the indispensable threads woven into the fabric of the debates over the meaning and purpose of the Czech nation. Yet, with the benefit of hindsight this discourse reveals another kind of history. Positivism, evolutionary (and racial) theory, and psychology all saw in a correlation between psychological, physical, and cultural types both an explanation of human diversity and a reason for its scientific classification. More important, however, is the history of this rhetoric in light of the history

9. The manner in which a society engages the "real" world in order to create the values it deems essential (through the use of objects that are said to exemplify particular qualities and subjects that claim to express them) is the topic of Nancy Munn's work. See, in particular, her *The Fame of Gawa: A Symbolic Study of Value Transformation in a Massim (Papua New Guinea) Society* (Cambridge, Eng., 1986).

of national awareness. It is not without significance that "national character" gains in importance also at the time in which nationalism gained a mass, popular support. It is in the latter part of the nineteenth century that a distinct sense of social class and regional provenance becomes articulated also as distinct "styles" of national awareness. Membership in a nation meant membership in the modern world, and the formation of a bourgeoisie—as an economically and politically privileged class—was a national process in which the economic and social consequences of industrialization combined with a rise in the importance of an elite culture conceived as a national, that is, vernacular culture. A characteristic of European nationalism,[10] it is particularly apparent in the nineteenth century among the peoples of small nations such as the Czechs.

In a careful study of the social origins of the Czech patriotic intelligentsia around the middle of that century, Hroch has demonstrated quite clearly that "most of them came from families of small-scale producers in town and country," calling into question "the customary notion that the thatched cottage was the cradle of Czech patriotism."[11] At this stage, neither teachers nor clergy were significantly involved. By the end of the century the situation changed, and as the society became more stratified, political parties found varying degrees and kinds of interest in the symbolism of nationhood. The urban middle classes were the ones most interested in folk tradition and the national arts, the literate consumers of tradition—usually presented in the form of high art—such as national theater, opera, literature, or architecture. Initially, it was they who read the pamphlets and periodicals, were members of such national athletic clubs as Sokol or were members of a society for the preservation of traditional customs.[12]

Thus the fiction of the thatched cottage becomes the reality of

10. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London, 1983).

11. Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe* (Cambridge, Eng., 1985) pp. 53, 54.

12. For a more detailed discussion of the way in which the "folk tradition" was appropriated, even "invented," by the ethnographic movement of the 1890s, as one way in which the ideology of National Revival was both idealized and disseminated, see Stanislav Brouček, *České národopisné hnutí na konci 19 století* (Československa akademie ved, 1979), and Andrew Lass, "What Keeps the Czech Folk 'Alive,'" *Dialectical Anthropology* 14 (1989), pp. 7–11.

Czech artistic and intellectual history. The process of national revival that helped form Czech society as it stood at the turn of the century, no longer doubting its right to self-determination as a linguistically and culturally distinct people, became the "myth" of the National Revival (*Národní obrození*), the monument of identity. With it, too, "national character" evolved from being an essential component in the search by historians and philosophers for a distinct Czech raison d'etre to a rhetorical device of everyday speech, a part of a "national ethos" that provided the framework for distinction in which what amounted to a middle-class style that was recognizably "ours" was deemed to exist as national essence. Such discourse finds its objectification in the cultural artifacts, in the doings and things of ourselves and of others, and it is, for that reason, experienced as real. Its power lies in its appeal, for in the world of conspicuous consumption national character *is* available through the appropriation of the cultural values that exemplify it and, like make-up and clothes—only more so—provide that individual with another dimension of identity. The values suggested in the opinions and behavior of the morally pure character of "Grandma," the hero of the classic of Czech national literature, became "everyman's" compendium of the perfect way to be Czech.[13] Any instance of its expression became an assertion of a deeply felt membership in what Anderson terms the "imagined community of nation-ness."[14]

National character is a topic of particular importance to a society confronted with the task of defining its own identity as a nation state. Like other nationalities in Central and Eastern Europe, Czechs faced the question in 1918. After more than a century of national "awakening" and ethnic "revivalism" they were now citizens of their own country. If difference was important to the minority living under the constant homogenizing rule of the Empire's bureaucracy, then it only gained in importance as much of what was once "theirs" became "our own," including the responsibilities that go with running the show. That Czechoslovakia was not Austria or Hungary was now

13. *Babička* (Grandma), the most important Czech novel of the nineteenth century is, to this day, a part of every child's education. It was written by Božena Němcová and published in 1856.

14. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 15.

clear enough, but who was to say that the new institutional order was distinctly "Czech?"

In a recent discussion of the formation of German national identity, Harold James points out that where the notion of national identity does correspond to the political and institutional arrangements that are in place, "there is no need to be preoccupied with the search for an elusive national character. The institutions themselves provide centers of attention and activity. People gradually regard them as a fine way of settling the numerous disputes that naturally arise from everyday life. They generate a sense of legitimation in themselves and in the community of which they are part, and which they come to represent. . . . It then becomes possible to speak of typical actions, or even national character." [15]

Much of what is characterized as the typical encounter with the German bureaucrat is but the logical outcome of functioning within the German system as it was set up under Bismarck in 1871. Similarly, Czechs to this very day often observe in their behavior nothing more than the continuation of the "mentalité" that characterized the Austrian Empire: the perfect subservient, inefficient bureaucrats.[16] Their cynicism and lethargy are considered a sign that they have never stopped blaming others, Vienna, for example, for their ills. What makes the Czech search for national identity particularly interesting is that most of the key issues were defined, in the spirit of nineteenth century nationalism, in terms of a linguistic and cultural minority fighting for its "equal rights" within the context of a large multi-ethnic and multilingual state. A distinct, stratified Czech society had established itself by the end of the century, but it was not until 1918 that this society became an independent nation-state.[17] With independence, old problems took on a new significance, and the act of terming as "national character" what amounted to institutional behavior involved more rationalizations beset by idealization and fabrication, as well as by critical self-reflection or systematic ignorance. New conceptual boundaries, silences, and the re-drawing

15. Harold James, *German Identity 1770–1990* (New York, 1989), p. 23.

16. Of course, this "self-explanatory" accusation is extended, depending on the context, to other periods of history. Most recently, forty years of Communism explains the difficulties the new society faces as it confronts a whole generation of lazy, Janus-faced collaborators who care only about their own personal good.

17. For a detailed discussion of the rise of a distinctly Czech society in the late 19th century, see Otto Urban: *Česká společnost 1848–1918* (Praha, 1982).

of cultural alliances now had to match the geopolitical boundaries of the nation state. The recent past was airbrushed as the distant one was again searched for some significant apparitions. The "nation" looked elsewhere for inspiration. "Others" retained their importance as England, France, and particularly the United States offered themselves as models of constitutional democracies for the future Czechoslovak state, which did not have a distinct institutional setup in place other than the one it wished to regard as obsolete.[18] New cultural meanings were assigned to old patterns of behavior long before the new order could be said to generate ones that, in James's terms, could be "eventually identified as national properties."

The Czech search for national identity had as its primary motivating force the centuries-long and ambivalent relationship with the Germans. A German-speaking population was a growing presence in the lands of Bohemia and Moravia since the middle ages, and the German language was, for a long time, the official language as well as the language of the elites: even Prague, the seat of the Bohemian crown, had been lost to the Viennese rule of the Habsburgs for several centuries. In many ways the struggle for independence was a struggle for freedom from what was perceived as the "German threat." This theme informed political activism, demands for economic reform, cultural production, and historical writing. In fact the development of a fully stratified, distinctly "Czech" society by the turn of the century is often understood as a decisive victory in this battle. Most importantly, many of the debates concerning national identity as well as the policies—directed, for instance, at resolving the minority problems—during the First Republic (1918–1938) have their source in this already well established meaning of the National Revival.

That nations are the embodiment of certain ideals and that these ideals are to be found in the culture's past is certainly one of the most

18. The new constitution of the independent Czechoslovakia was modeled on the United States constitution. Thomas G. Masaryk, the country's first president, had spent considerable time in the U.S. during the war and maintained a strong affection for the "American story." Jiří Kovtun, *Masarykův triumf* (Toronto, 1987), provides a detailed account of Masaryk's negotiations with the U.S. government and President Wilson during those years. For a recent discussion of the relationship between the Czech lands and Great Britain and the United States, see Eva Schmidt-Hartmann and Stanley B. Winters, *Great Britain, the United States and the Bohemian Lands 1848–1938* (München, 1991).

prevalent features in the ideologies of nation building. The concern with "origins" is a concern for distinction, a separation from others by virtue of "originality." Yet such a claim involves an appropriation of ideals that are simultaneously universal. Continuities are placed against discontinuities as the agendas of distinct intellectual moments are transformed into "new" ideological claims.[19] In a sense, the quest for national identity has as one of its outcomes the writing of modern history; both a nation and a discipline are "born."[20]

The nineteenth century

Whether there is something particularly humanitarian about the Czech national character and therefore about Czech history has been debated since the beginning of the nineteenth century, but it was most forcefully argued by the social philosopher and first interwar president Thomas G. Masaryk in the 1890s.[21] Certain social and

19. For example, German neoclassicism of the late eighteenth century claimed for the Germans the continuation of the classical Greek tradition (which the modern Greeks were said to have lost) while the Romanticism of the same period found the truth of the German spirit in the Teutonic principles embodied in the countryside, folklife, and the mythical past. German national ideologies continued to play out both these themes for a century and a half. They are as present in the Wagnerian tradition of the late nineteenth century as they are in the Nazi ideology of the 1930s.

20. The historiography of the late nineteenth century—and both Czech and German scholarship serve as excellent examples—is particularly notable for its double, apparently contradictory, concern with facts that, as the positivism of the period would have it, "must speak for themselves," and the concern with the teleological "meaning" of the nation's history. This tension between the particular and the universal is what set the terms of the argument between "history" and "historism," which was quite heated among Czech scholars at the time. An excellent theoretical discussion of this misleading distinction can be found in Hayden White's "Historism, History, and the Figurative Imagination," in *Tropics of Discourse* (Baltimore, 1978), pp. 101–20.

21. Masaryk gives credit to the Czech historian František Palacký, who developed this idea in his monumental *Geschichte von Bohmen* (1836–1867). See Thomas G. Masaryk, "Palackého idea národa českého" in *Naše Doba*, vol. 5 (1898), pp. 769–95. The original source, however, is Herder or, more exactly, two Czech intellectuals, Josef Jungmann and Bernardo Bolzano, who, in 1806 and 1816 respectively, addressed the relationship between nation and history in opposite ways. Jungmann followed the Herderian line closely. In his view, the nation is a naturally given social unity defined by its specific, national character, which, in turn, is expressed in language. Hence the insistence on linguistic nationalism, on the study of history which reveals the nation's character, and on the idea that while the nation is independent of the state, the state is dependent on the nation and its character. Bolzano's view, in contrast, maintained the difference between the nation and a linguistic community. While a diversity of the latter can make for a good nation, a nation is not a natural but rather a socio-political unit. Its purpose is given morally, to actualize God's kingdom on earth. The study of history provides the lessons and moral support necessary to accomplish the results

religious movements, such as the Hussitism of the fifteenth century, the Unity of Czech Brethren that followed, or the Czech National Revival that dominated the nineteenth century, were for him periods intrinsically linked by a common ideal—humanitarianism—that they all advocated and exemplified, as did the "great men" associated with them. These were the revealing, important times that bridged other, tragic times when events were dominated by foreign ideologies. Most notable was the Counter Reformation, during which the Czech nation was said to suffer through an "age of darkness" (*doba temna*) with the forced Catholization and Germanization that went with it. For Masaryk this humanitarian quality was the guiding principle of Czech national history. Czech nationalism had evolved from a deeply felt religious consciousness of the Reformation. That is how Masaryk understood the opening words of the Hussite battle song: "Ye are the warriors of God and the defenders of his Law" (*Kdož sú boží bojovníci a zákona jeho*). "In Žižka"—Masaryk wrote of the famous military leader of the Hussite armies—"and in the Taborites generally we have a true Czech type. Žižka—that is blood of our blood, bone of our bone—yes, Žižka, that is us."

Masaryk's opinions had a tremendous influence on the thinking of the Czechs, on their conception of themselves and on their understanding of their own history. He was instrumental in the formation of the new Czechoslovak republic in 1918 and became its first president. But while his philosophy of Czech history was as popular as he was it earned serious criticism. The most important, and the most sober, of the many voices that were raised in the often vicious debate was that of the historian Josef Pekař (1870–1937), who criticized his use of the term "humanity" to mean a particular rational, enlightened, moral view of human nature but which, as Pekař pointed out, was taken from Herder and the eighteenth century Rationalists.[22] It should not be superimposed upon the medieval

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that a society has already accomplished in the past. As the Czech philosopher Jan Patočka (1907–1977) has pointed out in several of his papers on this theme, while both strands can be detected in Palacký and even in Masaryk, for most of the time it has been the Herderian view that has prevailed, both in scholarly arguments and in political practice. See Jan Patočka, *Náš národní program* (Praha, 1990).

22. A fine English summary of Pekař's contribution to the "Masaryk debate" can be found in Karel Brušák, "The Meaning of Czech History: Pekař versus Masaryk," Laszlo Peter and

view of Christian dogma. Similarly, he objected to Masaryk's claim that the Hussites, Czech Brethren, and Taborites were democratic movements that challenged the medieval social and religious hierarchy. This was as preposterous an argument as assuming that there was a single, unchanging national type that transcended history and yet was exemplified by its actors, such as Jan Hus or Jan Žižka. For one, the religious sects were anything but egalitarian and democratic: "Civic equality" should not be confused with their *credo* that "all men are equal in the eyes of God." And as far as the national type goes, it was Pekař's opinion that the "mental orientation" of a people changed from one period of European history to another. If anything, Czech medieval culture was a result of influences that were mostly Western (German, French, and Italian) and by the time of the Hussite movement Czechs were so integrated into the flow of European history that, for a time, they stood at the forefront of its development. In Pekař's view, Czechs of the fifteenth century felt strong in their convictions not merely on religious grounds, for their self-awareness was national as well. It is not that an essential humanitarianism found in the Czech Middle Ages had naturally blossomed into the Nationalism of the nineteenth century, as Masaryk claimed. Quite the contrary, the Middle Ages disclosed, from even earlier, a distinctly Czech national consciousness.[23] "Where is Masaryk's so-called 'humanity' to be found in Czech history? The history of the Czech Reformation began with a revolution and ended in a revolution." Žižka and the Taborites were fanatics. Czechs have retained their nationalism for centuries; what has evolved is their humaneness. They have become gradually more cultured.

Whether national awareness precedes or follows a humane disposition, history reveals for Pekař and Masaryk that which is essentially Czech. The former may object to the latter's historically insensitive use of the term "humanity," yet the same can be said of Pekař's

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Robert B. Pynsent, eds., *Intellectuals and the Future in the Habsburg Monarchy 1890–1914* (London, 1988), pp. 92–106.

23. In a related debate, Pekař had also been involved in defending the authenticity of the early medieval version of the legends of the Czech patron saints, Wenceslaus and Ludmila. Thought to be a twelfth- or fourteenth-century copy, Pekař argued that the legend was a tenth-century original. He also interpreted the life and martyrdom of St. Wenceslaus as deeds that were nationally self-conscious in their significance.

Czech national consciousness of the tenth century. The fact remains that in both cases the search for the meaning of Czech history—such "meaning" is thought of as "forward looking" (teleological)—is a quest for a distinct identity that has temporal depth and that is ever present in the surrounding world. Particular historical lessons and the complex logic of their interconnection, in the end, reveal distinct qualities: there lies the key to the mystery of a nation's purpose.

Interwar period.

> Is humanism deeply rooted in our character, does it guide our deeds? Is humanism a belief that is alive and that the Czech nation follows?[24]

These are the central questions around which the influential journalist and writer Ferdinand Peroutka developed his argument in his book *Jací Jsme* (What Are We Like). As we have seen, it is not the first time these questions have been asked. But Peroutka, it seems, is challenged by more than just these Masaryk-like questions, and in formulating his answer he applies the very approach advocated by Masaryk, who, in his earliest works, fought for the acceptance of positivistic as well as sociological methodologies. It could even be said that Peroutka is more radical and realistic than Masaryk.

> We shall undoubtedly learn much about the spirit of the nation if we read Masaryk's books. But how much of this spirit of humanity has become part of everyday behavior we shall learn about, with an intense immediacy, from the way our neighbor acts after he catches the person who had crawled into his garden and trampled his flower beds.[25]

Peroutka begins with a critique of the Pan-Slavic theory of Czech humanitarianism (for example, "that Slavs are a peace-loving people"): "Nothing could hurt the question of humanity in the world more than if we managed to convince others that humanitarianism is a particularly Slavonic affair, unavailable to peoples of other

24. Ferdinand Peroutka, *Jací jsme*, (Praha, 1934), p. 149.
25. Peroutka, *Jací jsme*, p. 150.

blood composition."[26] Humaneness is not the sole property of Slavs: furthermore, the existence of any Slavic unity and therefore of a Slavonic character type is nothing but the wishful thinking of political ideologues. It is important to recognize the distinction, *within* the Slavic "nation," between a variety of different nationalities. The author chooses a quotation from Maxim Gorky that will leave no doubt in the reader's mind as to why the Czechs should not be confused with the Russians.

> The good-natured Russian drove nails into the skulls of Jews and sticks into the sexual organs of revolutionary women. . . . The Russian revolution is the victory of animalistic morality, the eruption of Asiatism, an outburst of zoological instincts.[27]

Nor should the Czechs look for parallels among the Poles, for in spite of the close proximity, there is a "total difference between our and the Polish character," from which stems "the mutual foreignness and lack of love that we feel toward each other."[28]

What Czechs are like has more to do with the circumstances of a small nation that has survived in the shadow of the Austro-Hungarian Empire than with the fact that "we" are Slavs. If anything, Czechs should be compared to Germans, with whom they have much more in common. They have been neighbors for so long and share a common "climate." Peroutka seems not at all bothered by his apparently contradictory logic; in one case the essential difference in character type between Czechs and Poles overrides their geopolitical proximity, in the other it is the *similarities* between Czechs and Germans that are determined by a shared "climate." And as far as Czechs being humane, Peroutka suggests that we see this quality in practical terms. It is a utilitarian tactic, the docility of a nation living in a mild world. "To this very day the citizens of Central Europe carry this quiet and mild origin in their blood. It was a climate without noise, an orderly, mild, climate of average temperature in everything. Not much happened there, nor was there much cruelty."[29]

We may certainly wonder at the author's need to ignore the many

26. Peroutka, *Jací jsme*, p. 210.
27. Peroutka, *Jací jsme*, p. 150.
28. Peroutka, *Jací jsme*, p. 160.
29. Peroutka, *Jací jsme*, p. 182.

horrors of Central European history, but the evidence, again, comes from the outside. Turgenev from the East and Balzac from the West both described the Germans as stoic and idealistic, as good as lambs, as soft and without any knowledge of life and as possessing a childish imagination and sentimentality. What happened that changed this state of affairs? According to Peroutka, change came with Bismarck, who had united the Germans under one Empire in 1871, and this large modern nation began to affect the German nature and draw it away from the "kind" and "docile" world in which other nationalities were forced to remain. As the Germans of the latter part of the nineteenth century rose to become the aggressive nation aware of its stength and its importance,

> we, without a state of our own, could not have its psychological side effects as well, and so the national idea did not color our souls. Nothing took place in our national life during the nineteenth century that would place those qualities that we consider to be our humanity to any particular test. We were saved that wisdom of politicians which is connected with power and force.[30]

Thus, the ambiguous logic of Peroutka's realism continues as he refers the *difference* in character between the Czechs and Germans to historical and political circumstances: the lack of statehood accounts for Czech docility, which is to be understood, therefore, as merely a matter of practical, political shrewdness. "One who loves comfort and the ordinary look of the world will be inclined more towards a political tactic that does not leave the limits of humanitarian means."[31] The alleged humanitarianism of the Czechs is de facto a strategy of common sense. Aggressiveness would, on the other hand, lead nowhere: the author recalls the words of Karel Havlíček Borovský, "A revolution against despots is a beautiful thing but only when it is successful."[32] The revolution in Russia is another matter. In a world of total oppression and disregard for human life, where long periods of famine "drove peasants into the forests to eat tree bark," anyone wishing for change had to think of extraordinary measures. In contrast, a Czech values human life. He

30. Peroutka, *Jací jsme*, p. 190.
31. Peroutka, *Jací jsme*, p. 183.
32. Peroutka, *Jací jsme*, p. 197.

is guided by the belief—from which no Slavonic characteristic will dissuade him—that "one is to have a good time." "Our humanity was from time immemorial a love of life and of things. There is nothing more to our national anthem 'Where lies my homeland' (*Kde domov můj*), than precisely this love of Being and things."[33] Accordingly, "the coup d'etat of October 28th (1918) had a virtually idyllic quality. There has never been a more humane revolution than ours."[34] "The principle of habit and the daily look of things: 'that's not done' [*ale to se přece nedělá*], is the principle that carries the most weight."[35] To be smart and reasonable, these are the intrinsic Czech qualities: common sense may be the only reliable tradition. It is this brand of humanitarianism, Peroutka feels, that is facing the challenge of the new Czechoslovak republic when Czechs must manage and defend their own independent nation-state.

There is a certain amount of irony in Peroutka's realistically guided analysis, aimed very much at the same phenomenon as that exposed in Jaroslav Hašek's novel "The Good Soldier Švejk." It first appeared in 1921–1922 and soon became one of the most popular Czech novels ever written. It poked fun at the Austro-Hungarian bureaucracy and military establishment. The disarming and thus powerful intelligence of the hero, private Švejk, rests on the principle that Czechs are distinguished by good humor, literal mindedness, and common sense. The character of Švejk, by now a popular hero and part of "everyman's" repertoire, has actually become the very model of these characteristics. It may be said that Peroutka's argument, like Hašek's Švejk, also *legitimates* this pragmatic attitude. In spite of the fact that such texts could be understood as being critical of the middle-class mentality, they highlight it, "explain it," give it credibility, and, particularly in the case of Švejk, an appealing style.[36] This somewhat cynical view of the Czech "nature" is a com-

33. Peroutka, *Jací jsme*, p. 205.

34. Peroutka, *Jací jsme*, p. 161.

35. Peroutka, *Jací jsme*, p. 204.

36. The following statement appeared in the women's weekly *Vlasta* 4 (1989), p. 11, as an explanation for the poor state of the "anti-drug campaign" in Czechoslovakia: "I would say that Švejk is behind this. Seriously, that character did not originate merely as the invention of Jaroslav Hašek. He represents (*zpodobnila*) some of our national traits, including the somewhat calculating negativism." A wall-hanging depicting the smiling hero Švejk holding a beer, together with the statement, "Take it easy!," is a common sight throughout Bohemia.

mon feature of the many works that attempted to come to grips with the meaning of the new nation as it stood facing its independence after 1918. Among the texts glorifying the historical expression of the peaceful, gracious Czech character, we find those that make the very opposite point. Shortly after the beginning of the war in 1939, S. L. Fischer, a professor of philosophy in Brno, argued that Hašek's Švejk was meant to illustrate more than just the cleverness with which the Czech character opposes all authority. The hero revealed "our poorly developed sense of order."[37] "Not knowing the art of governance, brought up to be continuously in opposition against state authority in the time when we had lacked freedom, we have been incapable, in such a relatively short time, of getting rid of such a deficiency. In fact, and in many ways, we have not even seriously tried."[38]

In the same year, a small pamphlet on the national philosophy of the Czech writer and philospher Ladislav Klíma, recalled his remarks of 1924 occasioned by the five hundredth anniversary of the death of the Hussite warrior Jan Žižka. Behind the glorious victory of 1918 Klíma saw a deep uncertainty, a Czech spirit that had lost its sense of purpose as it, once again, faced the meaning of Czech national existence. This weakness would make "a healthy Czech lumberjack better, that is, manlier, than thirty Czech members of parliament."[39] "Is not all the ideal enthusiasm, the sense of greatness, strength, and nobility, dying out in us? Do we have a goal at all today—a purpose? Do we know what we want? And if we don't, is it not the inadvertent decay that we face? Do we seriously think that our salvation lies with materialistic 'modernity'?"[40]

A similar view was expressed by the philosopher Jan Patočka in his 1929 essay on Czech literacy in Europe, where Czech literary modernism received the following comment: "As with our overall moral decay, here too the cause lies with laziness rather than with exhaustion. The Czech likes his life without problems, almost with the obviousness of the natural man, and this obviousness is becoming dangerous to him."[41]

37. J. L. Fischer, *Národní tradice a česká filosofie* (Brno, 1933), p. 28.

38. Fischer, *Národní tradice*, p. 29.

39. Jaroslav Kabeš, *Ladislava Klímy filosofie češství* (Praha, 1945), p.ll (quoting Klíma).

40. Kabeš, *Ladislava Klímy*, p. 10.

41. Jan Patočka, "Česká vzdělanost v Evropě," *Náš národní program* (Praha, 1990), p. 14.

No review could possibly do justice to all of the articles and books—many of which were published as separate, inexpensive pamphlets and intended for a wide audience—that addressed the "Czech question" in the interwar period. The views were many, as were the topics chosen to exemplify them. Nevertheless, certain key historical events became focal points of debates in which religious and political agendas came to be expressed. Among these, the long-lasting and unresolved relationship between the Czech- and German-speaking people appears as the dominant theme.

The millennial celebrations in 1927 of the martyrdom of the Czech patron saint Wenceslas resulted in many publications debating the national significance of this legendary figure. Some associated him with Western Christianization and a deep religious devotion—"he embodied the idea of the Czech state . . . St. Wenceslas becomes the direct prototype of what it is to be Czech" (*češstsví*)—while others charged that he had "collaborated" with the Germans.[42] For these, instead, it was the monks Cyril and Methodius who in 863 brought Slavonic liturgy and script to the Moravians from the East.

The issue of "Germanization" is also central to understanding the "tragedy of the battle at the White Mountain" in 1620. In his book commemorating the event, Josef Pekař argued that the "White Mountain wished not to be satisfied merely with a just neutrality in the battle between German and Czech, but rather was unable to deny its basic and instinctual distaste toward the Czech language from the very beginning."[43] In his logic language and nation are coequal. As the influx of foreign nobility assured the victory for German as both the official and everyday language, "one hundred years after the White Mountain it is possible to say that the very Czech political nation is only one half or by a small majority of a truly Czech nationality."[44]

Finally, in commemoration of the five hundredth anniversary of the death of the Czech religious reformer, Jan Hus, the historian Jan Herben wrote that "the whole nation followed Hus. Simply stated: a fifteenth-century Czech judged the church no differently than he judged the whole world. He would have no wool pulled over his

42. Karel Stoukal, *Svatý Václav a idea svatovaclavská v našich dějinách* (Praha, 1929), p. 36.

43. Josef Pekař, *Bílá Hora* (Rozmluvy, 1986), p. 73.

44. Pekař, *Bílá Hora*, p. 72.

eyes. He was in his education and morality a cut above compared to neighboring nations and so expressed a basic feature of his nature from which good virtues of citizenry were born."[45]

The emphasis purportedly placed by Hus and his followers on the use of colloquial Czech is an essential ingredient of the Hus legacy (and this is true to a large degree of the other examples as well). Thus Hussitism provides further evidence for the existence of the independent Czech-speaking nation. And what makes this association between language and nation unique, the argument goes, is the value Czech people had always placed on the knowledge of their own history, on literacy, and on universal education (*vzdelanost*).[46]

The relatively mobile population that is so characteristic of the modern nation-state in which most people meet as strangers must share not only a standard idiom and a colloquial language but a standard set of meanings or a culture in order for their cooperation to be successful and for the system to be effective. But such a culture is valid far beyond the immediate community of the individual's everyday life. While one's world of immediate others is continuously in flux, the meanings intersubjectively constituted and the "worldview" that gives them sense are based in this larger life-world that is already shared as an imagined community (the nation). And where the everyday encounters with the system can be said to test and refine the individual's ability to cope, the reproduction of this society is first and foremost dependent on an educational system that can produce a high, generalized level of literacy. Such an educational system is also a very powerful mechanism for the maintenance of social order. The production of cultural value is disseminated through this organized system of socialization that, therefore, occupies a central place in the structure of political legitimation; and nationalism, as a political movement and strong sentiment, is the generalizing language in terms of which both social policy and individual action "make sense." Such an ideology serves a real need in a world where, as

45. Jan Herben, *K Husovým oslavam* (Praha, [1915?]), p. 8.

46. Albert Pražák's *The Country and Nation in Czech Literature*, speaks of the long tradition of the "self-conscious desire for a religious self-determination that is both linguistic and national." *Vlast a národ v Českém Písemnictví* (Praha, 1940) p. 9. He traces this quality from the earliest beginnings in Slavonic and Latin manuscripts to the present.

citizens, individuals are first and foremost nationals. And the value of social or class and cultural, religious or regional differences takes on a relative significance in relation to this overriding, hegemonic discourse that uses the language of distinction to promote the idea of homogeneity, just as it claims universality for what amounts to a socially specific, class value.

The "age of nationalism" is the age in which the high culture of the newly constituted bourgeoisie has become the dominant culture that is centrally controlled and disseminated. It is a unified culture, made available to all and, to a large extent, the primary culture that the citizenry aspires to and identifies with. As far as "national character" goes, this much is clear: national character is never clearly defined and settled for good. On one hand, simply the result of living in a complex, industrial society, and on the other a set of "self-evident" meaningful qualities that are said to be culturally (not socially) specific, national character is a continuously argued and negotiated "theory" that is both based in and applied to the ongoings of everyday life. As we have seen, the role of the intelligentsia who engage in this discourse is crucial. In a world in which literacy is essential to citizenship, the "consumption" of national identity as cultural commodity is very much in the hands of those who hold some responsibility for the production of "ideas" and in the hands of those who hold the key to their dissemination. Monuments and museums, the production of literature and the arts, the press and most of all the educational system, all these are mediators through which the individual consumer is socialized into and identifies with his nation.

Of singular importance to the popularization and dissemination of national awareness in the new Czechoslovakia was the introduction of public education (*Osvěta*).[47] An organization designed to appeal to the widest possible public, it became the vehicle for the production

47. The Czech term "Osvěta" is, etymologically, a derivative of the term "enlightenment." It has been translated into German as *Volksbildung* but does not have a precise equivalent in English. I have chosen "public education" in place of "adult education" since the tradition of "osvětářství" implies a notion of intentional education of the public of all ages and, while it may be based in an organizational structure, it is not connected to formal education or the *receiving* of degrees. For a detailed analysis of the *Osvěta* set up during the interwar period in Czechoslovakia see Eva Hartmann "Politische Bildung im Rahmen der Volksbildung in der Ersten Tschechoslovakischen Republik," *Kultur und Gesellschaft in der Ersten Tschechoslovakischen Republik* (München, 1982), pp. 163–78.

of citizens. With slogans such as "Freedom through public education" (*Osvětou ke svobodě*) or "Toward democracy through public education" (*Osvětou k demokracii*), national awareness and citizenship were popularized at the local level throughout the country. Here history, folklore, and modern political slogans found their forum and appeal as popular tradition. Most of the materials from the interwar period discussed above had this public education (*osvětářství*) in mind. Published as short pamphlets in large editions, they were inexpensive, widely available, and appealed to a wide readership. Even Peroutka's "What Are We Like" first appeared in 1922 as a series of articles written for a daily newspaper. It was reprinted in book form in 1922 and reissued without any changes in 1934. And Pekař's pamphlet *White Mountain* (*Bílá Hora*) was also first published as a series of articles in a popular journal before it appeared in book form in 1921. His *Dějiny naší říše* (History of Our Empire), first published in 1914 as a history textbook for the upper grades of Czech high schools, remained—with some changes—the standard text throughout its many editions as *The History of Czechoslovakia* until 1945.[48]

Another important social mechanism for the promotion of citizenship, understood as a national identity and defined primarily in linguistic terms, was the organization of "Defense Unions" (*Obranné jednoty*). These local and regional associations had as their primary aim to weaken the German and strengthen the Czech positions in the new republic, particularly in areas that had a Czech-speaking minority population.[49] The counterpart to the German *Schulverein*, they had been founded by zealous Czech nationalists in the 1880s. Initially meant to defend the interests of the Czech, mostly rural, populations against Austrian Germanization, they became the most popular nationalistic organizations. These unions held on to the romantic ide-

48. For a recent discussion of the place of Pekař's high-school history textbook in the Czech educational system see Hans Lemberg, "Ein Geschichtsbuch unter drei Staatssystemen: Josef Pekař's Oberklassenslehrbuch von 1914–1945," in H. Lemberg and F. Seibt, eds., *Deutsch-tschechische Beziehungen in der Schulliteratur und im popularen Geschichtsbild* (Brunswick, Ger., 1980), pp. 78–88.

49. Interestingly enough, the new laws retained the same 20% minimum that was used under the Austro-Hungarian law, the proportion of the population that a local linguistic minority had to attain before it could be entitled to use a language other than Czech in their schools.

ology that nationality is the most sacred value and language its most visible expression. Their aim, according to one commentator, was "the national consciousness of the poor people, their cultural uplifting, and the strengthening of their economic power."[50] With the tables turned after 1918, their activities had the intended purpose in mind, "not merely to defend but to conquer the border regions and national islands. . . . With 1924, there begins for the Central School Fund [*Ústřední matice školská*] one of its biggest border problems: to build our strongest national and educational [*osvětove*] fortifications in order to defend and reconquer territories grabbed from us in the centuries of battle."[51]

In an excellent study of the history of Czech and German relations published in 1928, the Czech scientist and philosopher Emanuel Rádl drew attention to the tactics used by these school associations, which he characterized as "typically petit-bourgeois, more rural than urban." He noted that their practical purpose was the manipulation of people in regions where Czech was the minority language, for example, by convincing individuals to "return" to their Czech nationality, so that it was possible to set up Czech schools, raise the percentage of Czech-speaking bureaucrats in local offices, and put pressure on local authorities to interpret the land reform laws in favor of Czech small landholders. But Rádl's objections seemed to have remained unheard (except for some harsh criticism accusing him of being pro-German) in the nationalistic chaos that had introduced reforms that seemed to be but mirror images of those they had replaced. The shoe was now on the other foot.[52]

> What else is the education of citizens in practice but a substitution of free, autonomous morality by the laws of the state? Details aside: teachers voluntarily and with enthusiasm placed the school into the hands of the state and its patriotic ideology. The aim of education, so difficult to define by the great pedagogical minds, is now at hand: it is the aim of school education to transform God's creature, in whose heart lives a longing for eternity, absolute beauty, and justice, into a

50. Emanuel Rádl, *Válka Čechů s Němci* (Praha, 1928), p. 146.

51. In common parlance "border regions" refers to the lands of the Sudeten Germans. *Národní jednoty a Matice v Československé republice* (Praha, 1925), p. 5.

52. Rádl devotes detailed attention to the abusive character of the new language laws (introduced in 1920 and 1924), the land reform, and the educational reform.

> mere citizen of Czechoslovakia; to blind his mind so that the Czech language, the Czech country, the contingent laws of this state, and assorted myths about its past, can become the border of his life's horizon. . . . In consequence of this method, the education at Czech and German schools cannot meet: the Czech and German pupils do not have shared ideals *as humans;* the final measure of a Czech pupil is Czechism (*češství*) and of the German, Germanness (*němectví*).[53]

That high culture constitutes and in effect imposes the meaning and value of nation-ness in the name of popular culture is a well-documented fact, but to suggest as Gellner does that high culture dominates where "previously low cultures had taken up the lives of the majority," is not enough.[54] If anything, the very distinction between high and low culture is an essential ingredient in the invention of tradition and the construction of "national" culture. A tension between the two domains involves a double idealization, of the "pristine, original" Folk on one hand, and of the pure aesthetic and intellectual value of "high" Art, on the other. In similar manner, the value of national identity and, later, of "working-class" origin are presented—through the domesticating power of literature, arts and intellectual debates—as the desirable qualities in everyday life. As one consumes the high arts and learns to identify one's social identity in relation to the high art of living, one also consumes the concretized meanings of nation-ness. And so, the delicate fibers of the complex social organization of the state are continuously reinforced by a national mythos, by the symbolism in terms of which the state can understand itself as a legitimate social space with definite boundaries, that is, as a nation. The desire for national purity reflects the demand for a successfully integrated population. It is a middle-class world, a world of the petite bourgeoisie in which people's behavior reflects the system they work in but which lies—at the level of the individual—beyond them. But it is "their" world.

53. Radl, *Válka Čechů s Němci*, p. 153.

54. See, e.g., Tamás Hofer, "The Creation of Ethnic Symbols from the Element of Peasant Culture" in P. Sugar, *Ethnic Diversity and Conflict in Eastern Europe* (Oxford & Santa Barbara, 1980), p. 142; Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, Eng., 1983); Lass, "Czech Folk 'Alive'," pp. 7–11; Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1983), p. 24.

The home, the school, the work-place have conferred this identity upon them. It is a world in which mobility and uniformity are to a large degree a necessity prescribed as the freedom of choice. One has no choice but to establish one's distinction within the more general terms of nationality. It is one in which the discourse of identification, stated in terms of what I had defined as the aesthetics of distinction above, perpetuates and maintains this hegemony of national identity and provides for the production and reproduction of value that is both national and individual. To speak of the "national bourgeoisie" is to recognize the moment in the establishment of the industrial social order where the admiration for technological innovation and for national tradition have successfully come together as objects of desire. The availability of middle-class comfort combines with the availability of a traditional life-style. The consumption of goods that establish one's distinction as a member of the middle classes consists of the ability to consume "tradition" in the form designed and reproduced as high culture.[55]

By the time of the First Republic, the Czech National Revival was very much a standardized tradition in the hands of educators for whom the combination of High Art and humble, national, origins became values worth fighting for. Whether in the form of debates among the intellectual elites, in the production of Art and Literature that depicted (*zobrazovat*) the nation's history and tradition, or in the direct form of primary as well as adult education, the process of becoming a citizen meant becoming a Czech. (This may sound self-evident, but that is the point. You could, after all, become a German!) This quality of "being Czech" (*českost*) found its meaning-fulfillment concretized in objective form as middle-class values that had qualified as objects in the modern world of market capitalism in which the mechanical reproduction of "things," and their further differentiation, was both a condition of its success and the wardrobe of social distinctions. The aesthetic outlook of the Czech middle class became, especially after 1918, the majority's "life style," an aesthetic that provided the parameters of cultural experience. Within as well as against these parameters, other perspectives, like other

55. For a discussion of this topic in the Swedish context see Jonas Frykman and Orvar Lofgren, *Culture Builders: A Historical Anthropology of Middle-Class Life* (New Brunswick, 1987).

"looks," asserted their claim on a social identity in which the meaning of "nation-ness" and the concept of "national character" were challenged. On the left, international modernism in Art courted the proletariat and, in the name of class struggle, fought for the idea of a democratic state free of bourgeois nationalism. On the right, members of the urban upper class aspired to the tastes and manners of the West. For them too, "being Czech" did not imply an anti-foreign attitude. In the end, it was fascism and, under the German protectorate (1938–1945), Nazism that got the upper hand. It is fair to assume that the question of national identity and the topic of national character were only reinforced during those terrifying years. Judging by the rhetoric best found in the school books from elementary to university levels, these themes retained their currency throughout the past forty-five years. I would suggest that it was not, literally, the "working class" that got the upper hand after the Communist coup d'etat in 1948. Whoever it was that came to power, and whatever their "humble" origins may have been, it was the life of the bourgeoisie that they aspired to.

The "Hungarian Soul" and the "Historic Layers of National Heritage": Conceptualizations of the Hungarian Folk Culture, 1880–1944

TAMÁS HOFER

A fairly coherent picture of the "native" peasant culture was elaborated in East Central European countries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, following the earlier "discovery" of folk poetry, of folk rituals, and of peasant costumes. It was during that later period that ethnography as a branch of science became institutionalized; museums, learned societies, periodicals, and university chairs were established; and the elaboration of comprehensive images of "folk culture" was started.

"Folk culture" came at the most opportune time for ideologists, in a period of rising nationalism. It offered a fresh source of ethnic and national symbols and a new screen on which various ideas about the origin, "essence," character, and historic mission of the nation could be projected. There was no need to prove the antiquity and authenticity of folk traditions: public opinion and researchers were convinced that the peasantry carried the genuine old elements of the nation's ancestral culture; that the folk culture mirrored the national identity. The public expected the ethnographers to put together, piece by piece, and through strenuous research work, a scientific image of the national character, but we might look at the ethnographers' work from another angle. Guided by their own concepts about the nation's identity and the "heritage of folk culture," they verified these notions through a selective recording of cultural facts.

By emphasizing certain traits of folk culture and leaving others in the shadow, similarities and linkages with other nations and allies could be expressed. Under the spell of pan-Slavism, for instance, Slavic peoples were enthusiastically seeking common and ancient Slavic traits. Differences between folk cultures could also serve ideological aims. For instance, the Hungarians of those days wanted to be different from the Austrians, first and foremost. The different path and level of social and cultural development offered abundant proof, and scientific modelling even enhanced the objective differences. The Austrians used the concept of popular culture.[1] In the image of folk art a central place was allocated to the provincial art of Catholic religiosity, to votive pictures and objects of pilgrimages, to such works of learned artisans as pieces of furniture decorated with Baroque ornaments made for well-to-do villagers. This model assumed a lively flow of culture between cities and villages, between the cultural elite and the common urban and rural people. Folk culture was seen as a simplified, vulgarized, popular version of elite culture.

On the other hand Hungarians and other East European peoples used the model and myth of an ancient, autochthonous peasant culture. According to this model it was the peasantry that had preserved the traditions of the ancestral culture of the entire ethnic group, while the elites, the city-dwellers, and the aristocracy had broken away from the old ethnic culture by following foreign patterns and becoming cosmopolitan.[2] They devoted much attention to the *ősfoglalkozások,* such ancestral occupations as fishing and animal husbandry, and were seeking archaic traits of their nomadic ancestors.[3] In folk art, priority was given to the carvings of shepherds, and the embroidery of peasant women over the more sophisticated work of urban craftsmen.[4] The study of popular religiosity was completely missing from Hungarian ethnography and folklore right up to the 1940s, because of the view that it had developed under the influ-

1. Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1978).

2. Tamás Hofer, "The Perception of Tradition in European Ethnology," *Journal of Folklore Research* 21 (1984), pp. 133–47.

3. Michael Sozan, *The History of Hungarian Ethnography* (Washington, 1977), pp. 154–60.

4. Tamás Hofer, "Stilperioden der ungarischen Volkskunst," *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 29 (1975), pp. 325–38.

ence of the churches and hence it was not an autochthonous peasant tradition.

Both models had their historical reality and explanation in the center-periphery relations of the modern age. On the periphery, the ruling classes imitated cultural forms and patterns of behavior developed in the center. As a consequence, the gap between the elites and the rural peasant segment of these societies—which at best were only partially affected by changing fashions stemming from the center—became deeper and deeper. As a result of the peasants' isolation and exclusion from the tight network of cultural transmission established in core areas of the continent—in France or in England, for instance, where the existence of a great number of small cities and the peasants' involvement in market and cultural relations brought them into contact with other segments of the society—the peasant traditions in the eastern parts of Europe show a much greater originality.[5]

The Hungarian researchers assumed that the traditional, ethnic, popular culture in the villages they studied was being mingled with urban, cosmopolitan, and cultural elements of more recent origin and that their task was to select and to document the original, "ethnically characteristic" elements. Béla Bartók differentiated between the concepts of "folk song" and "peasant song," considering a folk song to be everything sung by the peasants, even pieces originating from the gypsy music of urban cafés. "Peasant music in the narrower sense of the term," he wrote, "is the totality of those peasant tunes that belong to one or more uniform styles."[6] He recorded these peasant tunes and made his selections on the basis of scholarly concepts of style that he himself had elaborated. Incidentally, the view that every people must have an autochthonous culture of their own, to be reconstructed by the researcher, was a dominant idea among the anthropologists who did fieldwork during that period, and this is why the analysis of the processes and consequences of colonization is almost completely missing from their descriptions.[7]

5. Hofer, "Perception," 137.

6. Béla Bartók, *A magyar népdal* (The Hungarian Folksong) (Budapest, 1924); published in English as *Hungarian Folk Music* (London, 1931).

7. Murray J. Leaf, *Man, Mind, and Science: A History of Anthropology* (New York, 1979), pp. 146–49; Bernard S. Cohn, "Anthropology and History in the 1980s," in Theodore K. Rabb and Robert I. Rotberg, eds., *The New History* (Princeton, 1982), pp. 227–52.

Disparate images were formed about the same folk culture. Behind the differences, we may identify different views on the "essence" of the nation, on the national character, on the nation's past and future, reflecting different group interests and influencing the selective attention of the ethnographer.

Folk culture as a historically stratified heritage

At the first plenary session of the newly established Ethnographic Society of Hungary in 1889, Antal Herrmann expounded the importance of the collection of ethnographic objects. "These objects are the relics of the domestic life of the people, to be preserved with reverence; they are the petrified witnesses of their past, like geological layers of the evolution of their cultural soil . . . that may throw a ray of light once . . . to more than one puzzle of history, because every prehistoric and historical period, every cultural transformation, every change of residence, every contact with other peoples leave their traces on the utensils of folk life."[8] This quotation testifies to an additive concept of culture composed of elements originating from different periods that may be ordered into historical layers. The geological metaphor and the endeavors to classify cultural elements historically had been valid for a long time—Bence Szabolcsi characterized the folk song research of Bartók and Kodály as the "geology" of folk music as late as 1938, the final product of which was the isolation of an ancient layer of oriental nature from the pre-Conquest times; other layers related to European influences; and a "new style of folk song" appeared in the early nineteenth century.[9]

The stratified model of folk culture made possible the description of relationships among nations and ethnic groups. It was used in Hungarian ethnography because its political task was to articulate the peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups in a multi-ethnic state, an image of contemporary Hungary which could be accepted—as they hoped—simultaneously by Hungarians, Slovaks, Romanians, and the rest. They supported the program of a multi-lingual, multi-

8. Antal Herrmann, "Hazai néprajzi muzeum alapitásáról" (Promoting a National Ethnographic Museum), *Ethnographia* 1 (1890), pp. 19–24.

9. Bence Szabolcsi, "Morgenland und Abenland in der ungarischen Volksmusik," *Ungarische Jahrbücher* 18 (1938), pp. 202–17.

national "state-nation" based on the equal rights of all citizens.[10] In contrast to the rising tide of nationalism and Magyarization after the 1890s, the "official" ethnography, cultivated in the museums and scholarly associations, stood for a more liberal and tolerant "state-nationalism." Its goals were clearly expressed by Antal Herrmann, a Transylvanian Saxon, secretary-general of the newly established Ethnographic Society: "in the advanced stage of culture—that is, in the process of modernization—various peoples of definite individuality may unite into a single nation . . . and by a multiplicity of contacts and mutual influences a certain ethnological and ethnographic unity may develop" as a consequence of the common geographical framework and common historical past.[11] The state administration believed that the recognition and presentation of the different folk traditions might serve the political integration of the state. It was in this sense that the crown-prince Archduke Rudolph could write in the Introduction to the monumental series entitled *The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in Writing and Pictures* (*Az Osztrák-Magyar Monarchia Irásban és Képben* 1887) that the various ethnic groups of the realm "would be presumably pleasantly affected" by their expert description and it would induce them "to seek their intellectual focus in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy." In his German-language Hungarian ethnological periodical launched in 1887, Herrmann expressed the idea with the image of the peoples living in the territory of the Hungarian state "constituting a huge, green crown of a tree distinctly separate in the forest of peoples" and "ethnologically interwoven" as a result of mutual influences. The metaphor was a rather forced one, as the crown of the tree in this case was composed of trees of different roots and trunks. "The breath of centuries is blowing through this crown in innumerable myths and traditions and . . . a rich, real folklore is heard from the branches in many voices."[12]

This approach demanded a relativization of ethnic differences.

10. M. Rainer Lepsius, "Nation und Nationalismus in Deutschland," in Heinrich August Winkler, ed., "Nationalismus in der Welt von heute," *Zeitschrift für historische Sozialwissenschaft* 8 (1982), pp. 12–27.

11. Antal Herrmann, "Jelentés az 1889. bécsi anthropologiai kongresszusról" (Report of the Anthropological Congress in Vienna, 1889), *Ethnographia* 1 (1890), p. 159.

12. Antal Herrmann, "Als Vorwort," *Ethnologische Mitteilungen aus Ungarn* 1 (1887), pp. 1–2.

Hungarian ethnographers, and some Romanian, Slovakian, and other researchers working with them in the Ethnographic Society, considered themselves as students of "Völkerkunde" and not of "Volkskunde." They located the cultures of the Carpathian basin within a general evolutionary image of human cultural history. The Ethnographic Museum of Budapest presented tribal societies, the archaic civilizations outside Europe, and the culture of Hungarian, Romanian, Slovakian, and other peasants in a joint exhibition. This was sharply different from the usual practice of the time, which placed the objects of compatriot peasants, perceived as documents of national identity, into a separate museum or linked them to the historical and archaeological collections from the nation's past, whereas the people outside Europe were frequently associated with the natural history collections. In 1906 Zsigmond Bátky compiled a manual on how to establish new ethnographic collections in Hungarian provincial museums: "Culture . . . is not linked to individual peoples but it spreads over other peoples from certain radiating points, and the peoples are only temporary carriers of different phases of human culture."[13] This view shows intellectual courage in the acceptance of a modern anthropological culture-concept and its application to the author's own national culture at a time when nationalist trends had become dominant in Hungarian life.

The apparently unbiased scientific, evolutionary approach could be used to support nationalism. Social Darwinism presupposed a struggle for life and a natural selection among nations and ethnic groups as well, and qualified the struggle among nations almost as a necessity.[14]

Folk Culture as the Objectification of the Soul of the Nation

This model deduced the continuity and integrity of folk culture from an unchanging, or scarcely changing, spirit of the people, or from a concept of "language" as the determinant of the way of

13. Zsigmond Bátky, *Útmutató néprajzi múzeumok szervezésére* (Guide to the Organization of Ethnographic Museums) (Budapest, 1906), p. 5.

14. G. Béla Németh, "Léthare és nemzetiség" (Struggle for Life and Nationality) in *Hosszmetszetek és keresztmetszetek* (Longitudinal and Cross Sections) (Budapest, 1987), pp. 466–72; Doris Byer, " 'Nation' und 'Evolution'—Aspekte einer 'politischen Anthropologie' in Austromarxismus," in Hubert Ch. Ehalt, ed., *Zwischen Natur und Kultur* (Vienna, 1985), pp. 285–312.

thinking and patterns of behavior. The source of this approach was in German idealism. "Hegel's assertion that the universal spirit constitutes the culture of a nation stands within a specific tradition not shared widely in England or in the United States. . . . The spirit, he said, forms the culture, and culture forms the nation." [15] Moritz Lazarus and Heymann Steinthal, the founders of the *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft* in 1860, expounded the relationship between language and the spirit of the people by postulating that the system of mythology, religion, cult, and law were based on language. Their periodical was transformed into the *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* in 1890, and continues to be the central periodical of German ethnography.[16]

Theories based on the spirit of the folk or on their language related the popular culture to an extra-historical, unchanging, or little changing, foundation. In 1906 a Hungarian art critic wrote that "however strange it may sound, one gets the germs of national fine arts also in national language." "The archaic language of the race (that is, the nation) gives the something that essentially guides the thinking of the race. . . . Music has developed directly from language. This musical tradition may modify the perception and even the sense of the objective world." [17]

As contrasted to the stratification model, which recognizes newer and newer geological layers, the concept based on the soul of the folk or on the theory of the "complete language" considered every alien influence as pollution. It set the objective of preserving the purity of the soul of the folk, for the authenticity of the popular spirit was proved by its ancient past. Thus the Hungarian folk spirit almost always appeared as an "oriental," "Asian" one.

Here we may discuss Hungarian orientalism briefly. The West and East have been symbols of a number of different cultural alternatives for every East European people: the West has represented modernization, the "center" to be caught up with, whereas the East has

15. George L. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses* (New York, 1975), p. 214.

16. Ingeborg Weber-Kellerman, *Deutsche Volkskunde zwischen Germanistik und Sozialwissenschaften* (Stuttgart, 1969), pp. 37–38.

17. Tamás Hofer, "A népi kultura jelentésváltozásai a századfordulón" (Variations of the Concept "Folk Culture" Around the Turn of the Century), *Valóság* 31 (December, 1988), pp. 42–48; Dezső Malonyay, *A fiatalok* (The Young Generation—Essays on Five Painters) (Budapest, 1906), p. 26.

stood for the traditional values, for identity to be preserved against this cosmopolitan Western influence.[18] In addition, the Hungarians kept in mind their nomad ancestors who had come from the East, and on this basis sometimes they classified themselves among the Asian peoples. They applied the paradigmatic concept of Asia as it was developed in European "Orientalism," disregarding the fact that this concept also contained the cruelty of Oriental societies, their inability to develop, and their indissoluble alienness.[19] From the Middle Ages onwards, the Hungarian nobility proudly regarded themselves as the descendants of Oriental nomad ancestors who had conquered the country. This consciousness had not so much an ethnic as a class connotation: the conquest of the country entitled them to possess the land and to resist even the king if he did not rule constitutionally. The origin of the peasants was unclarified, they were "lifted into" this nation of Oriental origin definitively only during the Reform Age from 1825 to 1848. At any rate the Oriental image, projected upon peasant culture, had noble traits. Hungarian folk art was described in a London English-language publication in 1911 by Aladár Kriesch-Körösfői, a painter: "The Hungarians were nomads, a race of warrior horsemen . . . . They are fond of ostentation and dignified of bearing. . . . We still find communities among whom a harvest festival, or a wedding feast with all its ceremony. . . and the brilliant yet solemn array of its participants, carries us back in thought to some Oriental fairyland of long, long ago."[20]

The evolutionary-minded ethnographers were seeking Asiatic relics among the simplest, most archaic elements of the peasant culture; further, they went to the linguistically related Siberian tribes to study their primitive fishing and hunting ways of life.[21] In contrast, the amateur authors, painters and poets were seeking manifestations of the "Oriental love of pomp" in the late, colorful popular costumes and folk art of the nineteenth century, and they quoted parallels from princely treasure troves and from the courtly art of Asia.[22]

18. Michael Herzfeld, *Anthropology Through the Looking-Glass: Critical Ethnography in the Margins of Europe* (Cambridge, Eng., 1987).

19. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York, 1979).

20. Aladár Kriesch-Körösfői, "Hungarian Peasant Art," in Charles Holme, ed., *The Peasant Art in Austria and Hungary (London, 1911)*, pp. 31–33.

21. Sozan, *Hungarian Ethnography.*

22. Hofer, "A népi kultura."

Perhaps the official cultural policy shifted towards the support of the nationalist model of "folk spirit" with the publication of the richly illustrated, officially sponsored series of "The Art of the Hungarian People" by Dezső Malonyay in 1907. Malonyay rejected the comparative and historical study of folk art and the scientific approach to it. He advocated the understanding of folk art emotionally, through direct experience, through immersion in folk life. According to him folk art manifested a special style, a special constitution. Malonyay did not speak about the origin of this spiritual constitution, but his enthusiastic critics, including the eminent art philosopher, Lajos Fülep, were convinced that in folk art the Asiatic spirit of Hungarians manifested itself. "The cradle of this style was rocked somewhere in Asia, and today it represents Asia honestly, with great strength and health in Europe."[23]

With his work Malonyay wished to strengthen the position of Hungarians in the Carpathian basin. "We should remember that our independent national individuality is endangered also by the fact that here several different peoples have been squeezed into one state. And such a closeness does not promote the strengthening of the national character. . . . We are exposed to mutual influence, and the purity of the national character suffers from it."[24] He refrained from any hurtful remarks against the non-Hungarians, but he wanted to enhance the "national force of resistance" and "cultural authority" of the Hungarians, and to renew fine arts on the basis of folk art. A young architect asserted that "one should live among this people so that we may be able to bring into our conscious art everything that is unconsciously, instinctively Hungarian. . . . I am surrounded by the Turanian breath, I inhale its ancient pagan fragrance into my soul, so that it should permeate me, enrich my inspiration and fantasy."[25]

23. Lajos Fülep, "A magyar nép művészete" (The Art of the Hungarian People), *A Hét*, May 5, 1907, in *A művészet forradalmától a nagy forradalomig. Cikkek, tanulmányok* (From the Revolution in Art to the Great Revolution: Articles, Essays) (Budapest, 1974), pp. 193–97.

24. Dezső Malonyay, *A magyar nép művészete I. Kalotaszeg* (The Art of the Hungarian People, Vol. I: The Region Kalotaszeg) (Budapest, 1907), p. 9.

25. Ákos Moravánszky, "Nemzeti és népies törekvések a ket világháború közötti magyar építészetben" (National and Populist Trends in the Hungarian Architecture of the Interwar Period), *Magyar Építőművészet* 2 (1983), pp. 20–22.

The Conservative Middle Class and its Image of Folk Culture in the 1930s

In these quotations one can sense the nationalism and great-power illusions of Hungary at the turn of the century. The First World War brought defeat and the Trianon peace treaty, placing 67 percent of the territory and 33.5 percent of the ethnic Hungarian population under the rule of the neighboring states, and this reality had blown away these illusions. Art teacher József Huszka was one of the chief advocates of the Asiatic interpretation of folk art, and his long-delayed work received a devastating criticism when it was published in 1930.

Instead of the ethnography of a multinational state, the ethnography of the Hungarian ethnic group, living now within the framework of several states, came to the fore. A critical approach in ethnography became dominant and refuted the alleged antiquity of folk traditions by relying on historical sources, pointing out that the colorful folk costumes evolved only in the nineteenth century, and the extensive shepherding, classified formerly as nomadic, evolved only in the sixteenth century, after the destruction of the small medieval villages by the Turkish wars. Instead of the "Oriental" traits, the new research emphasized such European cultural influences as Western Christianity, Protestantism, the effect of European historical styles upon Hungarian folk art, and the like. The Oriental elements had differentiated Hungarians from the Austrians; now these historical layers distinguished the Hungarian folk culture from its Eastern and Southeastern neighbors.

This realistic, moderately ethnocentric attitude was in accord with the political views of the conservative intelligentsia, made up of civil servants, white-collar workers, and professionals, which was separate from the "historical middle class" of gentry and aristocratic origin by behavior and attitudes.[26]

Professional ethnographic research had retained the comparative method and the geologically stratified cultural model of the earlier period, and its historical approach was strengthened by the study of written sources in archives. The four-volume, extensive handbook of Hungarian folk culture was prepared on this basis and pub-

26. Ferenc Glatz, *Nemzeti kultura—kulturált nemzet, 1867–1987* (National Culture—Civilized Nation, 1867–1987) (Budapest, 1988); Jozsef Huszka, *A magyar turani ornamentika története* (History of the Hungarian-Turanian Ornamentation) (Budapest, 1930).

lished between 1933 and 1937. The opening sentence of the work was that "Hungarian ethnography is a science serving our national self-knowledge." Separate volumes were devoted to "material" and "spiritual" culture, but the planned volume on the institutions of peasant society was not published. The reconstructed image of "traditional culture" was described instead of the life and thinking of contemporary peasants, and thus elements related to the influence of modernization, urbanization, the state, schools, and churches were left out.[27]

Károly Viski wrote the Introduction, wherein he stated that the authors considered traditional culture to be a system where "each element is linked to the other just as in a branching coral reef. Its elements are at first sight insignificant. . . . Not only the supporting pillar of traditions can be recognized within the structure, but the active force of its creative capacity, also its ability to assimilate foreign substances drifting towards it from outside." Thus it had been an open, changing system. Its capacity to integrate foreign elements disappeared only in the last few decades. Ultimately the image of a peasant culture, similar to the Central European neighbors, had unfolded with relatively few and isolated traces suggesting the Oriental origin.

Viski and the authors were trying to use an ethnological, anthropological concept of culture that still had to be justified. "Our peasants mostly appeared in their holiday best in front of the public, just as they had been presented by our poets and artists. Instead, science exposes such hitherto less known depths and values of their life that. . . are full of work, sweat, sacrifice, and suffering, hence they mean the life of the nation." Here the presentation of the tools and techniques of agriculture, the processes of food production, and the like are being justified against the still general normative understanding of culture among the wider public. Instead of an ethnocentric-national interpretation of culture, only looking for the ethnic specificities, the Hungarian authors moved their book towards an objective-scientific interpretation of culture.

They saw their duty as giving realistic historical information to the Hungarian reader and promoting the incorporation of the peas-

27. *A magyarság néprajza* (Ethnology of the Hungarians), 4 vols. (Budapest, 1933–37).

ant cultural tradition into national culture. According to them the knowledge of peasant culture "enriches the national self-knowledge and self-consciousness of our entire society. . . . it strengthens the desire and will to remain and become even more Hungarian. It is particularly the ethnographic heritage, besides our language, that is suited to link the universality of Hungarians together in time and space as a living power," the only allusion to unity with Hungarians living beyond the political frontiers to be found in the volumes, which avoided all forms of irredentist propaganda.

This manual differs from the contemporary German ones both in content and in orientation. The Germans usually concentrated on folklore and folk art and wanted to document the operation of folk spirit. On the other hand, this Hungarian handbook is close to certain North and East European ethnographic syntheses which explored the historical stratification of the peasant cultures, and the historical contacts of peoples, within an evolutionistic, ethnological-comparative framework.

The Vision of Folk Culture in "Agrarian Populism"

At the turn of the century the enthusiasm towards folk art and culture had no relationship with the movements launched for the improvement of the peasantry. When in 1907, for instance, Lajos Fülep was meditating on how a national art could be created from the folk art explored by Malonyay, he saw realistically that folk art was a "completed style" and if a learned artist utilized some of its elements the outcome could only be a "reflected art." He also dreamed about the possibility of "a man coming. . . whose whole individuality is created for telling his message in the language of this style," but he did not think of the possibility of training peasant youth brought up in folk culture to become artists.[28]

From the 1920s onward the situation changed with the appearance of a new intellectual populist movement. The cause of the peasant culture and the cause of the peasants, as an underprivileged, basic stratum of the national society, were connected. The national value attributed to the peasant culture was used as an argument to justify the claim of young intellectuals coming from the peasantry, the

28. Fülep, *A magyar nép művészete*, p. 196.

"populist intelligentsia," to a greater role in the nation's life. Broad reform programs were developed to improve the situation of the peasantry and to create a new national consensus based on peasant values and institutions. Hungarian populism was essentially a movement of intellectuals and literary men, and it could never accomplish the political organization and mobilization of the peasantry. Hungary was not represented in the "Green International" in the late 1920s, and it had no autonomous and strong peasant party.[29]

The populist movements inclined towards a "mild racial discrimination: the good common people are of different ancestry from the bad Establishment. Sometimes this belief is mythical or nearly so."[30] This argument was used by the populists in Hungary against those of gentry origin, and mostly against the bourgeoisie, the assimilated members of the middle class of German and Jewish origin. The "populist intelligentsia" was suffering from "status incongruence" and was struggling for political influence against the establishment. On the eve of World War II and during its first years these disputes became particularly polarized, partly between the "urban" and the "populist" camps, and partly between the conservative government and the extreme political opposition of rightists and leftists.[31]

Folk culture again got into a strong political force-field and its mythicization had also begun. As contrasted to the scientific folk culture interpretation of the conservative establishment, the populist camp elaborated images of popular culture based again on the soul of the folk and on the structure of the language, emphasizing eternal traits and Orientalism. These images usually rejected the acquired and accumulated cultural values of the European history of the Hungarians and advocated isolation from Europe. It was even stated that the very adoption of Western Christianity had been a mistake.[32] The politically highly sensitive, many-sided, and cultivated László Németh stated that the leadership had been taken over by writers and politicians, often of mixed origin, who thought along

29. Ghiţa Ionescu, "Eastern Europe," in Ghiţa Ionescu and Ernest Gellner, eds., *Populism: Its Meaning and National Characteristics* (London, 1969), p. 121.

30. Peter Wiles, "A Syndrome, Not a Doctrine," in Ionescu and Gellner, *Populism*, pp. 166–79.

31. Gyula Juhász, *Uralkodó eszmék magyarországon, 1939–1944* (Dominant Ideas in Hungary, 1939–1944) (Budapest, 1983).

32. Juhász, *Uralkodó eszmék*, pp. 29–30.

foreign, Western lines. These "thin (that is, diluted) Hungarians" have replaced the full-blooded "deep Hungarians" who have been squeezed into a minority but who represented the real Hungarian thinking of the past centuries.[33] This emphasis on the national character and national interests served also in the defense of independence against the growing menace of Nazi Germany and against the danger of Bolshevism. The politically multicolored populist movement was generally characterized by the quest for a "third road," rejecting association with Germany as well as the Communist model, and trying to find a Hungarian democratic solution between the two with a popular-front policy. At the 1943 conference of the democratic intellectuals held at Szárszó, László Németh characterized the "third road" by a metaphor, saying that if there were a Dutch and an English party in New Guinea, the third road would be represented by such a political movement as would say: "New Guinea for the Papuans!"

Sándor Karácsony, professor of the philosophy of education, elaborated a theory of Hungarian thinking based on the principle of "juxtaposing" or "coordinativeness" as opposed to Indo-European subordinativeness. From the principle of "juxtaposing," Karácsony drew inferences about the Hungarian system of classification, political thinking, preferences in social relations, and the like. He criticized the Hungarian educational system, saying that it imposed alien schemes of thinking on the Hungarian youth. In Karácsony's view, democratic political objectives and peaceful relations with neighboring peoples could also be justified, and progressive leftist intellectuals sympathized with those views. On the basis of his interpretation, however, folk culture was again placed upon depth-psychological, mythical foundations.

Sándor Karácsony's ideas led Gábor Lükő to draw a forceful, unified vision of Hungarian folk culture. Lükő was a well-trained ethnographer and folklorist who studied at the Budapest and Bucharest universities. In his book, he delineated the Hungarian perceptions of space and time, functioning deeply in the subconscious and manifested in the folk culture, and he also explored the hidden symbol-system of folk poetry and folk art.[34] He had given up the method of

33. Laszlo Németh, *Kisebbségben* (In Minority) (Budapest, 1939).

34. Gábor Lükő, *A magyar lélek formái* (Forms of the Hungarian Soul) (Budapest, 1942); reprinted in 1987 in Pécs with a new Afterword.

scientific comparison and was looking for typological equivalences to prove the basically Oriental nature of the Hungarian folk culture. He referred to Asiatic parallels drawn from Japan and China, proving a fundamental difference between the Hungarian and the Indo-European mentality. In 1942 this interpretation was regarded as anti-German and anti-Nazi, though two great Indo-Germanic peoples, the Anglo-Saxons and the Russians, were fighting against Hitler. In his passages on cultural history, Lükő tried to minimize or even wipe out the significance of any cultural influence mediated by the Hungarian nobility and urban burghers, by schools and churches. Any influence coming from the elites in the past was regarded as a sort of pollution, an implantation of alien traits into the authentic folk culture. This attitude was shared by other "peasant-fundamentalists" in the populist camp. These views rejecting the European cultural contacts were qualified by the humanist poet Mihály Babits as the "theory of cutting back." "Everything should be cut off, so that only the ancient, holy trunk should remain, the original, wild, archaic trunk without ornaments, like a rugged and superstitious idol." "We should shut ourselves up in our own smallness, we should preserve the special ancient colors and primitive tastes as purely as possible. Not only the gods keep us in evidence, but folklore as well."[35]

The conservative circles proposed their own image of folk culture against the mythical interpretations of the populists and extremists. With the participation of several departments, an Institute of Hungarian Studies was established at Budapest University. The Institute organized an annual series of lectures to expound their views on various issues of Hungarian history and national culture. The series of lectures organized in 1940–41 under the title "Lord and peasant in the totality of Hungarian life" emphasized the constant interrelationship and bilateral contacts linking the peasants and non-peasants in literature, in liturgy and popular religion, in the relationship of folk music and composed music, and also in social mobility. They argued that the "folk culture" constantly changed, growing richer, and that it could be understood only within the cultural system of the entire nation— thoughts parallel to Kroeber's famous comment

35. Mihály Babits, "Pajzzsal és dárdával" (With Shield and Spear), *Nyugat* 7 (1939), quoted in Juhász, *Uralkodó eszmék*, pp. 29, 85.

on peasant society being a "part society" and peasant culture being a "part culture."[36]

Democratic progressives stressed that membership of the nation "is not a matter of body and blood, but of soul and moral decision," and this was the basis of the movements organized for "teaching" the elements of folk culture throughout society in order to strengthen its Hungarianness, to promote the integration of the nation.[37] Zoltán Kodály defined folk music as the "musical mother tongue of the nation" and organized an effective movement for incorporating folk music into primary school education. István Györffy, Professor of Ethnography at the University of Budapest, elaborated a comprehensive program for introducing peasant traditions in garments, in the interior decoration of homes, in music, dance, and even in legislation.[38]

With the appearance of the "populists" the label "urban" was attached to the bourgeoisie of cosmopolitan culture and partially of Jewish origin, politically an opposition group. Its members sympathized with universalistic intellectual currents, supported avant-garde art, and provided the early leaders of the trade union and labor movement.[39] It is remarkable that Bartók, and even Kodály, could unfold their activities as composers using folk music with the support of these urban-bourgeois, partly Jewish, circles. Bartók's *Cantata Profana*, written on a Romanian *colinda* motif, around which a curious "intellectual" myth was built in Hungary, may be an example of how the artist can express the anxieties of the modern age with musical innovations drawing from folk traditions.[40]

36. Alfred L. Kroeber, *Anthropology* (New York, 1948), p. 284.

37. István Györffy, *A néphagyomány és a nemzeti művelődés* (Folk Traditions and the National Culture) (Budapest, 1939), p. 7.

38. Ibid.; Kálmán Kulcsár, "A popularis modernizáció problémája. A magyar népi mozgalom a harmincas-negyrenes években" (The Problem of the Populist Conception of Modernization: The Hungarian Populist Movement in the 1930s and 1940s), *Társadalomkutatás* 1 (1988), pp. 5–17.

39. Viktor Karady, "Zsidó identitás és asszimilácio magyarországon. Marjunecz László interjúja K.V.-ral a magyar-zsido társadalomtörténet kutatásának kérdesiről. I. rész" (Jewish Identity and Assimilation in Hungary: L. Marjunecz's Interview with V.K. About Problems of Hungarian-Jewish Social History, Part I), *Mozgó Világ* 8 (1988), pp. 26–49.

40. Tibor Tallián, *Cantata profana—az átmenet mitosza* (The Cantata Profana of Bartók—The Myth of the Transition) (Budapest, 1983).

Some Closing Remarks

People living outside Eastern Europe may be surprised to see how political movements and social classes used different models of peasant culture to fight against each other and for power and hegemony.

István Bibó, writing in 1946 about the "poverty of the East-European small states" said that "in these countries 'culture' has been a factor of enormous political significance; however, this does not mean so much the flowering of culture but rather its politicization. As these countries did not 'exist' in the Western European sense of unbroken historical continuity, it became the task of the national intelligentsia to discover and nurse the distinctive and separate linguistic, popular individualism of the new or reborn nation and to justify what was really true, namely that these new popular frameworks . . . were more deeply rooted and more alive than the locally existing dynastic state frameworks."[41] George L. Mosse in Germany noted that "it must be also remembered, that cultural experience was a political reality in Central Europe. . . . At times when parliamentary government does not seem to be working well, men are apt to return to the idea of culture as a totality which encompasses politics."[42] A special significance could be attributed to folk culture within culture as "national consciousness had grown up alongside the ideal of popular sovereignty."[43]

All of this may help to explain why in Hungary even today some youth groups cultivate the traditions of popular culture, instrumental music, songs, and dances almost as a "secular religion," thus expressing their adherence to the nation believed by them to be of a higher order than the state.

41. István Bibó, "A kelet-európai kisállamok nyomorúsága" (The Poverty of East European Small States of 1946) in *Valogatott tanulmányok* (Collected Essays) (Budapest, 1986), II, 223.

42. Mosse, *Nationalization*, p. 215.

43. Ibid., p. 2.

Business Mentality and the Hungarian National Character

ZSIGMOND PÁL PACH

1.

Governor Miklós Horthy told Adolf Hitler at their meeting at Klessheim on April 16, 1943, that "Hungary generally has many difficulties with the Jews, since two hundred thousand more of them live in Hungary, which is a small country, than in Germany. . . . Hungary herself is to blame for this situation, for the Hungarians have held for a thousand years that it was not becoming for a nobleman to deal with money and they had their business and finance done by Armenians, Greeks, and finally by Jews. This is why the Jews have played such a great role in Hungary. There are not even enough Hungarian economists to replace them."[1]

This utterance of the governor expressed a view that had been quite common in Hungary at that time, though with different overtones and political conclusions, and had been echoed by a wide range of people from the extreme right to several representatives of the progressive political and intellectual elite.

This view had two main features to be noted. First, it identified the Hungarian *people* with the Hungarian *noblemen*, projecting certain features of the nobility onto the whole of the society and representing these as national characteristics. Second, it considered the above described mentality as *constant* throughout a whole millennium in Hungarian history.

Was this view actually justified? Is it true that the Hungarian noblemen had always been kept clear of commerce and business matters by their own pride and haughtiness? Earlier Hungarian history, particularly the economic history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries proves the diametrical opposite.

1. György Ránki, ed., *Hitler hatvannyolc tárgyalása, 1939–1944*, vol. 2, (Budapest, 1983), pp. 82–83.

2.

"Hungarian noblemen," according to an official military report dated 1550, "engage in trading, employ merchants as assistants, and trade in cattle, cloths, food, copper, and all sorts of other commodities. That is the practice all over Hungary indeed."[2] According to a report of the Treasury, the fiscal authority, in 1563 "most of the magnates and gentlemen trade in cattle, hides, cloth, horses, plums, and others, and they all would like to be exempt from customs duty."[3] A Hungarian landlord, György Hédervâry, exposed his intentions at the beginning of the 1540s: "The desire of my heart is . . . to buy a ship capable of holding a thousand measures of barley and wheat. I shall then take barley, flour, and other victuals with me," in order to sell them for a good profit.[4] Tamás Nádasdy, the Palatine of the 1550s, regularly bought livestock to be driven to Austria and he established about a dozen seigniorial demesnes on his estates in Western Transdanubia, having them cultivated by paid—i.e. not only servile—labor in order to produce as much grain for sale as possible.[5] At the end of the 1560s, another aristocrat, György Báthori of Ecsed, declared that, because of the destruction of his properties by the Turks, "there was nothing else left for him but to supply his own needs by constant working" and, therefore, he requested the king to grant him permission for duty-free wine export to Poland as "there were markets to be held and he wished to send his wine there."[6] "Our noble lords," the noted Protestant preacher, Péter Bornemisza, wrote not much later, "hoard wine, wheat, meat, and other food in plenty until there is a dearth, in order to sell at quadrupled prices."[7] One could quote much in the same vein about Hungarian noblemen and magnates of the sixteenth century. Far from looking down on trade

2. Quoted by Sándor Takáts, *Szegény magyarok* (Budapest, 1927), p. 143.

3. Vilmos Fraknói, ed., *Magyar Országgyülési Emlékek*, vol. 4, (Budapest, 1876), pp. 515–16.

4. *A Hédervâry-család oklevéltára*, vol. 2, (Budapest, 1922), p. 122.

5. Zsigmond Pál Pach, *Die ungarische Agrarentwicklung im 16–17. Jahrhundert. Abbiegung vom westeuropäischen Entwicklungsgang*, (Budapest, 1964), pp. 25, 106–07.

6. Quoted by György Komoróczy, *Borkivitelünk észak felé. Fejezet a magyar kereskedelem történetéből*, (Kassa, 1944), p. 297.

7. István Nemeskürty, ed., *Bornemisza Péter válogatott irásai, 1553–1584*, (Budapest, 1955), p. 229.

or considering it beneath their dignity, they engaged in it as the most natural thing in the world and made it their daily practice.

Just as in the case of the German *Gutsherren* and *Ritter* east of the Elbe or the Polish *pans* and members of the *szlachta* and also the English gentry—not to mention some groups of the French *gentilshommes*, though bound by *dérogeance*[8]—the Hungarian landowners were also driven to trade in agricultural produce and to market production by the major incentive of the general European phenomenon of the sixteenth century: the economic boom termed the price revolution. As is known, severe misfortunes befell Hungary just at that time. The country had been torn into three parts after 1541, as a result of the Osmanli Turkish conquest—Royal Hungary, ruled by the Austrian branch of the Habsburg dynasty; the Transylvanian principality which was a semi-independent part of the Turkish empire; and the territory under Turkish rule—and suffered great human and material losses in the course of almost continuous Turkish wars. For all that, the country had already been linked to all-European trade and the nascent modern world-economy by so many strands that it could not isolate itself from the effects. The Western European price revolution reached Hungary, too, and what is particularly worth noting is that the price revolution was principally an *agrarian* price revolution: the prices of agricultural products, and raw materials, increased at a considerably higher rate than the prices of industrial commodities and wages, in Hungary, as well as in England and in continental Western Europe. While up to the late fifteenth century, the Hungarian landowners had little incentive to trade in agricultural goods, in the sixteenth century they already responded to the rising agrarian prices, which were forced up also by the significant demand for grain and fodder for the armies during the Turkish wars, by changing their economic behavior.[9] They turned towards the market themselves,

8. In France a whole series of edicts—the most important in 1560—was issued during the sixteenth century expressly forbidding the *gentilshommes* to engage in commerce under pain of *dérogeance*, that is forfeiting their noble status and privileges: G. Zeller, "Une notion de caractère historico-social: le dérogeance," *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie*, 21 (1965), pp. 43–45. Cf. G. Huppert, *Les Bourgeois Gentilshommes*, (Chicago & London, 1977), pp. 73, 84.

9. Zsigmond Pál Pach, "The Development of Feudal Rent in Hungary in the Fifteenth Century," *The Economic History Review*, 2nd Ser., 19:1 (1966), pp. 1–14; Idem, "En Hongrie

and no anti-mercantile national character or class-pride held them back.[10] This was true even of the highest nobility. Members of prominent families, the holders of leading political and military offices, captains of castles who distinguished themselves in the fight against the Turks, almost to a man they were busy trading in cattle, wine, and grain. Nor did the middle and lesser nobility despise profitable business: in the numerous acts of the Diets concerning commerce we can read about both "the mightier and the lesser" and about "magnates and gentlemen."[11]

It was precisely during the peak period of the price revolution and cattle exports to the West—to Vienna, the South German towns, and Venice—that the "burghers of the Hungarian free and mining towns" submitted a petition to the Diet of 1574 that "trading in hides, horses, oxen, and other similar goods should not be allowed to the lords and the gentlemen." The Estates of Royal Hungary, of course, "considered that this could not be granted," and they even incorporated in law their own principle of the time "that magnates as well as noblemen should be free to trade in any merchandise."[12]

3.

And trade they did indeed, not only at the peak of the sixteenth-century price revolution but also during the first part of the seventeenth, when the market was already rendered uncertain by violent fluctuations of agricultural prices. A number of aristocrats and leading politicians continued to busy themselves with cattle and grain trading. The Princes of Transylvania, Gábor Bethlen and György Rákóczi I, were among them, as well as the president of the Trea-

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au XVIe siècle: l'activité commerciale des seigneurs et leur production marchande," *Annales: Économies—Sociétés—Civilisations* 21:6 (1966), pp. 1212–31.

10. No significant impact, either encouraging or discouraging, of religious convictions on the trading activity can be observed among the Hungarian noblemen in the sixteenth century. Theodor Mayer had already brought it forward as a counter-argument to Max Weber's thesis that the economic endeavors of the Calvinists in Hungary were in no way different from those of the Catholics at that time: *Deutsche Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Neuzeit,* (Leipzig, 1928), p. 27.

11. Acts 1543:26, 1548:55, 1553:18, 1557:16, 1558:44, etc.

12. Act 1574:37.

sury of Royal Hungary Pál Pálffy and his brother István, the Palatine Miklós Eszterházy, the Archbishop of Esztergom Péter Pázmány and the Bán, governor of Croatia, György Zrínyi, and later his sons, the poet and general Miklós Zrínyi and his brother Péter. The Treasury often paid the purveyors of the army partly by land grants, and family estates of considerable size were established this way. Landlords continued trading in wine and other goods, too.

A report from 1655, handed in to the Treasury by a senior clerk of the South-West Hungarian customs office, Daniel Rauch, offered a comprehensive picture of the trading by magnates and lesser nobles of the time. The officer stressed that "the members of nobility . . . all engaged in trade," but left no doubt that such business had become increasingly dominated by feudal methods, privileges, and arbitrary regulations. "The magnates and gentlemen having taken to trading, . . . as soon as they saw a gain in anything, they took it over for themselves; they deprived common people and merchants of all the opportunities." And the "noble lords" pretended that the grain, wine, cattle, and other products obtained in any way originated from their own seigniorial demesnes, and sold them duty-free within the country as well as abroad.[13]

The noblemen of seventeenth-century Hungary carried on their trading activities without giving up their feudal prerogatives or mixing with the burghers in towns. Exemption from customs duty soon became a similar nobiliary privilege as immunity from taxes: it was not the trading nobles who were obliged to pay customs duties, but rather the trading burghers who tried to gain nobility precisely in order to avoid duties.

Contemporary sources reveal similar tendencies in agricultural production. The employment of paid labor on seigniorial demesnes became rare, and unpaid compulsory services, *robot*, became overwhelming. In the first part of the seventeenth century, the landlords frequently imposed them at will on their serfs, who, by then, were bound to the soil not only legally but overwhelmingly in practice as well. The agrarian system of late feudalism, termed the "second serfdom," unfolded and became consolidated in Hungary, in many

13. Published in *Magyar Gazdaságtörténelmi Szemle* 5 (1898), pp. 577–89.

respects similar to developments in Poland and the East German territories.[14]

All of this coincided in time with the end of the agricultural boom. The price revolution was partly over by the 1620s and 1630s and completely over by around 1650. And if the rise in prices used to affect mainly agricultural produce, the depression took a similarly agrarian pattern: the price of grain decreased almost everywhere much more than that of other products.

And, indeed, by this time there did appear the figure of the Hungarian nobleman who gave up trading and withdrew completely from commercial activities. In 1642 a Hungarian magnate, István Hédervάry, a descendant of the same György Hédervάry who exactly one hundred years earlier had wanted to buy a ship to further his trading, portrayed himself thus in a letter addressed to one of his relatives: "reproach me not for my wedding, nor for my great expenses; for my poor father also considered keeping his own table decent as satisfaction enough; neither can I live otherwise, since I am my father's son."[15] And only a few decades later, a Transylvanian aristocrat, Miklós Bethlen, related in his autobiography that when he had practiced "honest trade" during the 1670s and 1680s in wine, cattle, and wheat, "my ill-wishers besmeared me that the merchant blood shows in me, that my mother was the daughter of one," i.e., of a merchant.[16] And when he drew up a large-scale plan for the establishment of a Transylvanian trading company and referred to the example provided by West European nations, he received the following opinion from a committee consisting mainly of magnates and noblemen and delegated by the 1703 Transylvanian Diet: "The English, Dutch, and the Germans are both apt and professional in trade by their nature. However, we are not only ignorant of commerce, as no one in our families has ever dealt with commerce [!], but we do not even know what trade consists in."[17]

How characteristic it was of the changed times! Trading—which, in the sixteenth century, had still been a natural way of life for many Hungarian magnates and noblemen—became, by the end of

14. For the developments in the seventeenth century see Pach, *Ungarische Agrarentwicklung*, pp. 39–94, 116–64.

15. *A Hédervάry-család*, vol. 2, p. 260.

16. László Szalay, ed., *Gr. Bethlen Miklós önéletirása*, vol. 1, (Pest, 1858), pp. 172–73.

17. Quoted by Imre Lukinich, "Egy erdélyi kereskedelmi társaság terve 1703-ból," *Századok* 47 (1914), pp. 475–76.

the seventeenth, such an unfamiliar activity for the majority that they blackened those who continued to pursue it and regarded themselves as people entirely devoid of any mercantile sense and expertise. The emergence of the system of "second serfdom," which restricted the mobility and the market production of the peasantry and hindered urban development, also impeded the economic modernization of the nobility. The mentality of the Hungarian noblemen also became more inflexible in the wake of this; feudal manners prevailed, capitalist features wore off, and trading turned into an activity bearing the mark of *dérogeance*.

4.

In the early eighteenth century, after the expulsion of the Turks, there were favorable conditions for the acquisition of large estates in the newly reconquered parts of the country, and some of the "great acquirers," such as Sándor Károlyi or Antal Grassalkovich, still showed some entrepreneurial agility reminiscent of the former market-minded noblemen of the age of the agrarian boom, but these features vanished after one or two generations. A type of "absentee" landlord came into being, living far from his domains, spending money excessively, keeping a luxurious residence in Vienna, and concerned about his estates only in order to get as much money as possible.[18] It came to be characteristic of the management of the large estates in Hungary during the eighteenth century that the surplus of wine or other produce was usually not taken to the market, but waited for the Greek, Armenian, or Jewish buyer on the spot instead. This is why several big landowners permitted and promoted the settlement of Jewish merchants on their estates and protected them by the force of their seigniorial rights, as the Eszterházys did in Kismarton, the Pálffys in Pozsonyváralja and Stomfa, the Batthyánys in Rohonc, the Zichys in Óbuda, and the Károlyis in Nagykároly.[19]

18. See for instance Edit Jármay-István Bakács, *A regéczi uradalom gazdálkodása a XVIII. században*, (Budapest, 1930), pp. 23, 37, 71; János Ravasz, *A sárospataki uradalom gazdálkodása a XVIII. században*, (Budapest, 1938), pp. 27, 72, 91.

19. László Schäfer, *A görögök vezető szerepe Magyarországon a korai kapitalizmus kialakulásában*, (Budapest, 1930), pp. 19, 23, 44; Konrad Schünemann, "Die Armenier in der Bevölkerungspolitik Maria Theresias," in *A gr. Klebelsberg Kunó Magyar Történetkutató Intézet Évkönyve*, vol. 3 (1933), pp. 212–42; István Virág, *A zsidók jogállása Magyarországon*,

On the other hand, there was the Hungarian country gentleman who lived mainly on the serfs' services on his medium-sized or small estate, engaged at most in the local county affairs and entangled possessory legal actions, besides going to weddings and hunts and offering hospitality to neighbors and county notables. This type of nobleman became the characteristic figure of the majority of the Hungarian ruling class in the eighteenth century, unaware of market conditions and not even interested in them, regarding trade as an occupation unworthy of gentlemen or Hungarians. The conservative poet, Baron Lőrinc Orczy, championed precisely this lack of business-mindedness as the criterion of the Hungarian character, when other voices began to be heard in the 1780s:

Heated debates rage among us,
Does shameless trade befit the Magyars?
For it may indeed corrupt our morals,
Say, where do you think it might lead us?

In counties Zemplén, Szabolcs, Ung, and Bereg
Much money, food, and wine fill all the cellars.
Need we more? Should our lives be disconcerted?
So that more money might stuff all our purses?[20]

And in the 1830s and 1840s the view that trading is alien to the Hungarian mentality was expressed even by historians, to be sure, not approvingly but critically. Since the relevant historical sources had not yet been discovered, this characterization was projected back to earlier times as well. The historian Mihály Horváth wrote, in the belief that the way of thinking in the sixteenth century had been the same as in the eighteenth century, that "the common opinion, at least that of the noble classes, . . . biased by prejudice, had cherished the most absurd ideas concerning commerce."[21] And when some years later, in 1847, Jácint Rónay compiled the first Hungarian book on characterology he also considered the contempt for trading as

1657–1780, (Budapest, 1935), pp. 20–47; F. Eckhart, *A bécsi udvar gazdaságpolitikája Magyarországon, 1780–1815*, (Budapest, 1958), pp. 164–65, 337–38.

20. Lőrincz Orczy and Ábrahám Barcsay, *Két nagyságos elmének költeményes szüleményei*, (Pozsony, 1789), pp. 184–86.

21. Mihály Horváth, *Az ipar és kereskedés története Magyarországban a három utolsó század alatt*, (Pest, 1840), p. 28.

an organic component of the nation's character: "Roman patricians were forbidden to trade by the *Lex Claudia;* there is no such clear law in Hungary, yet the *Lex Claudia* asserted itself as a custom, and custom is law in this country, the land of prescriptions."[22]

5.

Some peculiar features of Hungarian economic and social history in the nineteenth century provided new ground for the maintenance and even the reinforcement of such stereotypes. The forerunners and the advocates of the national reform movement in the first half of the century participated with hard words in the "heated debates" mentioned by Lőrincz Orczy and opposed the indolence of the nobles who looked down on trading.[23]

And indeed, the grain boom of the Napoleonic wars and the subsequent wool boom connected with the West European industrial revolution offered economic incentives for several major Hungarian landowners again to develop their market production and to rationalize the management of their estates.

Moreover, during the Hungarian *Vormärz,* certain groups of the middle nobility, too, were stimulated to adopt bourgeois habits and to turn towards the market. This is why it became possible for them to act as the leading class of the 1848–1849 bourgeois revolution which abolished serfdom in Hungary.

After the defeat of the revolution and the war of independence and the Austro-Hungarian Compromise, *Ausgleich,* of 1867 this pro-

22. Jácint Rónay, *Jellemisme,* (Győr, 1847), p. 108.

23. The great awakener of the Hungarian reform movement, Count István Széchenyi, bitterly asked his fellow aristocrats, "Does our work, as far as trading is concerned, deserve mention? . . . Would not all products dry up in our own places, if the Jew did not call on us for them? . . . Many landowners view this trading activity and toil with disdain and consider themselves born to nobler tasks": *Hitel,* (Pest, 1830), pp. 110, 139–40. Another prominent reformer, Baron Miklós Wesselényi, outlined a similar picture: "the magnates and the lesser nobility . . . many of them consider the burghers and their occupations beneath their dignity and status, with a certain bloated arrogance. . . . The merchant is not worthy of our friendship or our conversation for many of us. The depressing consequence of such prejudices is that even the little trading one finds in our country is in the hands of foreigners": *Balitéletekről,* (Bucharest, 1833), pp. 75–76.

cess could advance only in the peculiar forms largely determined by previous historical developments.

One of the peculiarities can be observed in capitalization on the large estates. The new great agrarian boom in Europe between 1850 and 1870, the termination of the internal Austro-Hungarian customs frontier, and the growth of Austrian and Czech manufacturing industry offered favorable conditions again for Hungarian agriculture in respect of markets and prices. Under the influence of the new prosperity, numerous major Hungarian landowners took steps to adopt capitalist patterns and to modernize *production;* yet, in contrast with their predecessors in the sixteenth century but continuing the eighteenth-century traditions, they themselves refrained from participation in *commerce,* and left the occupation of selling their produce, which they continued to regard as beneath their dignity, to mainly Jewish merchants.[24]

Another peculiarity of Hungarian capitalist development was that these practices produced wholesale merchants in a generation or so—with the participation of foreign capital, too—who were to become the founders of many banking institutions and manufacturing enterprises in Hungary in the period following the *Ausgleich*. Aristocrats and the higher ranks of the middle nobility also received a share of the profits of these enterprises, but usually not through actual participation in the venture or management, but rather through nominal positions held on boards of directors or supervisory bodies. On the other side, Jewish entrepreneurs appeared on the large estates with their activities not merely covering trade in produce but, here and there, also production: as capitalist leaseholders they paid rents to the landowners.[25]

It was this very situation which the activities of an "Association of Hungarian Husbandmen" attempted to change from the 1890s on. Although this movement was called an "agrarian" one, thereby contrasting it with the prevailing trend of economic policy called "mercantile," its aim was to develop mercantile aspirations in the owners

24. "Only production but not marketing was regarded as gentlemanlike . . . even immediately before the First World War": János Makkai, *Urambátyám országa. Középosztályunk illemrendszerének és társadalmi viselkedésének szociográfiája.* (Budapest, 1942), pp. 225–26.

25. See for instance Iván T. Berend and György Ránki, *A magyar gazdaság száz éve,* (Budapest, 1972), pp. 24–71; Julianna Puskás, "A tőkés nagybérlet a XIX. század végi Magyarországon," *Történelmi Szemle* 1 (1957), pp. 90–103.

of large estates in Hungary, to put an end to their anti-commerce attitude, and to help them to become independent businessmen instead of the earlier profitable but subordinate participation in industrial and banking institutions or the simple practice of relying on their land rents. Under the leadership of great landowners, the agrarian movement also wished to involve wider circles of the "Christian country gentlemen," those lesser estate owners who—at the time of the agrarian slump which followed the boom in the late nineteenth century—kept going downhill financially in great numbers.[26]

A third feature of the emergence of capitalism in Hungary was the fact that the unfolding of a bourgeois mentality among the middle and lesser noblemen, which had started in the decades preceding the 1848 revolution, came to a standstill and the majority was unable to join in the stream of economic transformation. These noble families, who lost unpaid labor as a consequence of the abolition of serfdom and who lacked capital and business experience, sank into poverty and debts—especially during the agrarian crisis at the end of the century. Their sons moved to the cities en masse but seldom engaged in commerce or business. They flooded the quickly overdeveloped public service area and took positions from the highest to the clerk level in the state, county, and municipal administration, for there they could remain "gentlemen" according to their traditional order of values and were not degraded to the state of common citizens.

The period after the 1867 compromise saw the re-emergence, "second flowering" as it were, of the *dérogeance* concept of the nobility in the "gentry-world" of Hungary. It was even more conspicuous and glaring—being even more anachronistic—than it had been earlier in the feudal world. It was precisely in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that the figures of the Hungarian gentleman making merry with tears in his eyes to sobbing gypsy violins and of the card-playing, dueling hussar officer became notorious, and such types were frequently seen by foreigners as the embodiment of the Hungarian national character.[27]

Contemporary and later Hungarian fiction offered many realistic

26. From the contemporary literature: Gyula Rácz, *A magyar földbirtokosság anyagi pusztulása*, (Budapest, 1906).

27. Sándor Eckhardt, "A magyarság külföldi arcképe," in *Mi a magyar?*, (Budapest, 1939), pp. 118, 127.

descriptions of the decline of the middle and lesser nobility and of its transformation into what is called the "gentry" in Hungary, apparently with a meaning different from the original English term. Hungarian novels, from the *Egy régi udvarház utolsó gazdája* (Last owner of an old mansion-house) by Pál Gyulai to the brilliant works of Kálmán Mikszáth and Zsigmond Móricz, provided faithful reports on a gentry mentality, which regarded the preservation of even the appearance of a gentlemanly way of life as of paramount value; the "true" national behavior was to keep aloof from capitalism and business with feudal pride, or with a feeling that success in these fields was, at any rate, unattainable.[28]

And one may ask the question: why could the novelist Mór Jókai, so distant from this realistic view, the faithful portrayal of the gentry, become the most popular and most widely read author of the Hungarian public at the time? (Many of his novels were published in translations, too.) The answer is likely to be found in a paradox. The "great story-teller" created and described a type of nobleman that was almost nonexistent in Hungarian reality: his brilliant engineers, husbandmen, merchants, entrepreneurs, and bankers offered fascinating compensation for the bourgeois development of the nobility which did not actually take place and for the national dreams that were not fulfilled by them.[29] Confronted with such heroes, the frustrated descendants of the late nobility might have reasoned that *they*, too, could achieve the same, should they only wish to or should they prefer to lead that kind of life. The successful newcomers of the bourgeoisie, on the other hand, might have thought that it was *they* who realized the ambitions of the nation that others were merely dreaming of. This was the main cause of Jókai's popularity with practically all levels of the Hungarian public.

6.

Following fiction belatedly, historians also began to describe the course of the declining gentry, the contradictions of which were even more explicit after the First World War.

28. Pál Gyulai, *Egy régi udvarház utolsó gazdája*, (Pest, 1867); Kálmán Mikszáth, *A Noszty fiu esete Tóth Marival*, (Budapest, 1908); Zsigmond Móricz, *Uri muri*, (Budapest, 1928); etc.

29. Mór Jókai, *Fekete gyémántok*, (Pest, 1870); *Az aranyember*, (Pest, 1872); etc.

The people who resettled into the remaining one-third of historic Hungary from the territories lost after the Peace Treaty of Trianon, a considerable portion of whom were precisely the descendants of impoverished noble families, further increased the numbers of those who expected *public service positions* or military commissions from the state to enable them to carry on their "gentlemanly" way of life.

This social stratum, which preferred to call itself the "Christian gentle middle class" or the "historic middle class," though having filled its ranks with elements of other social origins, preserved the gentry conventions, the traditional aversion to commerce. "In order to conceal their own weak-heartedness and indolence, they successfully propagated the absurd nonsense that it was a gentlemanly job to work as a clerk in the tax office, while being an entrepreneur or a merchant was unsuitable for Hungarians"—as a member of the class put it in a self-critical tone.[30] At the same time, some of that class were about to penetrate the field of business on the band-wagon of extreme right-wing, anti-Semitic political movements, with the help of the counter-revolutionary state power, to take the despised—but also deeply desired—positions in the economy out of the hands of the mainly Jewish bourgeoisie.

A stereotype of the Hungarian national character—sometimes not devoid of a certain self-complacency, yet with a critical edge and the demand for change—became crystallized in this socio-political atmosphere. The most prominent Hungarian historian of the interwar period, Gyula Szekfű, wrote about the "anti-commercial and anti-capitalist talents of the Hungarian race" in 1920 in his widely acclaimed work, *Három nemzedék* (Three generations),[31] and stated two years later, in *A magyar bortermelő lelki alkata* (The mental constitution of the Hungarian winegrower), that "such facts of economic history . . . that Hungarians do not work as merchants and cannot be accustomed to do so are well known to everybody and have even become platitudes recently." Also in this study he claimed to have proved "how much the principle of trading and production for profit disagreed with the Hungarian nature," that "Hungarian agriculturalists were lacking in practical business acumen," and that, "concerning our racial make-up, we became unquestionably con-

30. Géza Paikert, *Ahogyan egy magyar a magyart látja*. (Budapest, 1942), p. 11.

31. Gyula Szekfű, *Három nemzedék. Egy hanyatló kor története*. (Budapest, 1920), p. 291.

vinced that it is almost the opposite of what the German expresses by the term *wirtschaftlich*, and it is as far from what we call commercial talent and flexibility as heaven is from earth and fire from water."[32] It was in the same year of 1922 that another historian, Ferenc Eckhart, published his monograph *A bécsi udvar gazdasági politikája Mária Terézia korában* (The economic policy of the Viennese Court in the time of Maria Theresa) in which he gave voice to a similar opinion. "Hungarian mentality was not at all conducive to the development of capitalism. . . . The Hungarians of the eighteenth century would have had to be good organizers and good merchants to turn the economic development of our country in the same directions as in the Western states. . . . They would have had to take care of the economic questions, and even the rich should not have been ashamed to deal with them, and to discard all the principles of living in a seigniorial manner. . . . All these bourgeois characteristics were quite far from the mental habit of Hungarians, *nobility and peasantry alike*. . . . Undoubtedly, the Hungarians may be listed among those peoples which have the least inclination to develop in a capitalist direction."[33]

Other historians and social scientists also described the Hungarian national character in terms of this pattern.[34] Disregarding the evidence of earlier periods—in particular, the not at all anti-mercantile attitude of the sixteenth- and partly seventeenth-century nobility—they applied the term *unwirtschaftlich* not only to the Hungarian gentry, but also to embrace the whole nation, the "Hungarian race," throughout its entire history. The economist László Schäfer, discussing the role of the Greeks at the early stage of capitalism in Hungary, stated: "The Hungarians had neither inclination nor talent for trading; in fact the animosity against this branch of economy can still be observed in the descendants of *both the late lords and the late serfs*."[35] The renowned agrarian historian Imre Wellmann, studying

32. Gyula Szekfű, *A magyar bortermelő lelki alkata. Gazdaságtörténeti tanulmány*, (Budapest, 1922), pp. 24–25, 46–47, 64, 81–82.

33. Ferenc Eckhart, *A bécsi udvar gazdasági politikája Magyarországon Mária Terézia korában*, (Budapest, 1922), pp. 273–74.

34. Characteristically enough, the sharp critic of Szekfű's work, the historian Elemér Mályusz, agreed with him on this point: "A reformkor nemzedéke," *Századok* 56 (1923–1924), pp. 42–43.

35. Schäfer, *A görögök*, p. 17.

the eighteenth-century population of Gödöllő—a large estate in the middle of the country—found that "the Hungarian peasants adhered to the soil best. To work for others as a cotter, to be an artisan or a dealer did not suit him. The German peasants, on the other hand, . . . were much more inclined to follow trades, to become grocers, to run taverns, etc. The Slovaks stood somewhere between the two." He stressed "the economic indifference of the Hungarian peasant," and, referring to Szekfü and Eckhart, took the "indisposition of the Hungarian race for profiteering" as a well-known fact: "they had always preferred land to speculation, and were too proud to kowtow to others."[36]

7.

In interwar Europe the problem of national character stood in the limelight largely in those countries that had been affected by ruptures, distortions, and backwardness in their modern history. Those nations that were steadily progressing along the lines of bourgeois development did not bother about defining themselves again and again, but often viewed themselves ironically, as can be seen in the case of the British and the French. The Germans, on the other hand, published a great number of writings on national character after their defeat in the First World War, to mention only those of Erich Kahler, Hermann Kaiserling, Leopold Ziegler, and Eduard Spranger.

The impact of the relevant German literature could be felt in the writings of the Hungarian philosopher Lajos Prohászka whose book on the subject entitled *Vándor és bujdosó* (The wanderer and the refugee) attracted great attention in interwar Hungary. Although the author did not directly raise the problem of business mentality, his work is to be considered also in this context. He found the figure of the "refugee" dominant in the Hungarian national character, with such features as a tendency to self-imposed seclusion and hiding, the pursuit of preserving a modest but stable existence, and a restriction to mere self-defense. As opposed to this, the Germans were more of

36. Imre Wellmann, *A gödöllői Grassalkovich-uradalom gazdálkodása, különös tekintettel az 1770–1815 esztendőkre*, (Budapest, 1933), pp. 38, 84, 101, 167.

a "wanderer," restless and agile, always yearning for something and meditating on something. When these two attitudes met in history, the German spirit made the Hungarian one a bit more open and directed it more towards movement or action, but this trend had always been thwarted by the old instincts of the "refugee" making him disposed to seclude himself.[37] As can be seen, this characterization was not far from the image of *unwirtschaftlichkeit,* but by the time it was published, from 1932 to 1934 in a series of articles, then in 1936 in book form, conditions had changed so much owing to the advance of German fascism that Prohászka's book gave rise to quite different connotations. The concept of the "refugee" stirred sharp objections and the controversy stimulated further inquiry into the problem of Hungarian national character.[38]

The increased interest in the subject resulted, of course, primarily from the recent political developments. It reflected the ever-growing feeling of impending danger owing to German expansion, but at the same time also the hopes of the Hungarian extreme right for a rearrangement of Hungarian life according to the Hitlerite pattern. Consequently, the works on "national characterology" that became especially fashionable in the late 1930s contrasted the sober equanimity, the "comfortable sluggishness," the "inherited national inertia"[39] of the Hungarian people with the extremism of the fascist German racial myth on the one hand, while on the other, they exposed anti-Semitic tendencies and strove to substantiate the greedy aspirations of a would-be bourgeoisie. They were agreed, however, to consider the aversion of the Hungarian character to commerce as tantamount to evidence, and differed, at most, in the matter of terminus a quo. "There is no doubt that the Hungarian mind, from its very beginnings, was disinclined to what we now call the bourgeois way of life. . . . The Hungarian ideal has remained, almost to this day, the politically interested, militant noble gentleman"—a Hungarian philosopher of history, Tibor Joó, wrote in 1937.[40] "We

37. Lajos Prohászka, *Vándor és bujdosó,* (Budapest, 1936).

38. For a detailed discussion of Prohászka's work and its reception see Miklós Lackó, "Bujdosó vagy szabadságszerető realista?," in *Korszellem és tudomány,* (Budapest, 1988), pp. 168–86.

39. Mihály Babits, "A magyar jellemről," in *Mi a magyar?*, pp. 59, 65, 86.

40. Tibor Joó, "A magyar nemzeti szellem," in *Magyarságtudomány.* (Budapest, 1937), p. 31. While Paikert argues that "the Hungarians, being resourceful artisans and merchants

were also traders in our own way. . . . Yet buying and selling had never been our province. We left that to the Greeks, Armenians, and Jews"—the enthnographer Károly Viski expressed in 1939,[41] in accordance with other noted authors in a volume of essays *Mi a magyar?* (What makes a Hungarian?), edited by Gyula Szekfű. "Commerce was carried on only by despised immigrants who stood outside feudal society: Armenians, Greeks, and Jews. Noblemen did not lower themselves to such occupations. Their legal successors, the Hungarian middle class, has inherited this attitude and has a certain aversion to careers in business right to this day," and "remnants of the scorn and hate which feudal society had felt for commerce . . . can be found in general public opinion even today"—was the judgment of another ethnographer, János Kósa, in the early 1940s.[42] The psychologist István Boda regarded it as a "typical characteristic of Hungarians" that "they attach value to neither successful getting on in life nor adaptation to that sort of economic activity which is largely appreciated by other nations."[43]

And what is particularly worthy of attention is that this self-identification, this auto-stereotyping, fell on good soil not only among the "historic middle class" and the rightist circles but also among progressive intellectuals and politicians.

"The Hungarian people," the humanist poet and scholar Mihály Babits wrote in 1939, "at cornhusking time, like to tell the story of the prince who set out to try his luck. . . . Hungarians are both lazier and more clever; they sail the seven seas only in imagination." "This personality type does not get ahead in the world, since he does not really want to."[44] And a last quotation: "Whatever they say about the Hungarian trading this way or that way in the past, and that . . . Armenians, Jews, Germans crowded him out later on can only be

in the Middle Ages . . . , later, mainly because of the enormous losses in human life during the Turkish occupation of Hungary in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, were too much reduced in number to produce tradesmen, too, besides soldiers, husbandmen, public servants, and politicians. This is why the Hungarians practically did not deal with economic, industrial, commercial questions right up to the end of the last century": *Ahogyan egy magyar*, p. 7.

41. Károly Viski, "A magyar jelleg a néprajz tükrében," in *Mi a magyar?*, p. 374.

42. János Kósa, "Magyar rendiség és osztálytársadalom," in *Magyarságtudomány*, (Budapest, 1942), p. 370.

43. István Boda, *A magyar személyiség nevelése*, (Budapest, 1942), pp. 150–51.

44. Babits, "A magyar jellemről," p. 67.

patriotic exaggeration and cannot, in essence, be true." The truth is that: "We do not like trading and have always despised bothering with money and goods, the coming and going, the bargaining and lies." "And this is true not only of Hungarians of *noble* birth but also of *peasant* Hungarians. This is why it is so difficult to guide Hungarians to careers in business, no matter how much all the ministers implore them, or how much all the university professors prompt them to it. For, to be sure, a good number of these counsellors . . . would not like to become traders either. Neither would I, so why should I blame them?"[45]—professed the radical peasant democrat, Péter Veres, in the early 1940s.[46]

8.

Even the new great turn of Hungarian history in 1945 did not put an end to such stereotypes and the social attitudes behind them.

During the first two decades of postwar development, in a strongly centralized state economy, a commercial mentality and business sense were not, and could not be, management requirements; indeed, a lack of them appeared more desirable. In the framework of the planned instruction system, the central economic leadership did not need merchants or businessmen in the nationalized firms but, apart from engineers and technicians, assiduous clerks were called for in the economy, men who were to follow the detailed central

45. Péter Veres, *Mit ér az ember, ha magyar?*, (Budapest, 1941), pp. 31–32, 38–39, 123.

46. There were but few authors in interwar Hungary who questioned these stereotypes and looked at national character as a historical concept. "The talkative Italians were silent in the age of the Borgias; the disciplined and puritan Englishmen were bullies in the Elizabethan times; the unbelieving French built the most beautiful cathedrals; the lazy Spaniards conquered a continent during Carlos V's reign; and the prodigal Hungarian noblemen used to be cunning and devoted merchants" pointed out the liberal essayist László Cs. Szabó; "A magyar ember latin szemmel," in *Nyugat*, (Budapest, 1928), p. 219. "The most exciting task of the scholars would be to reveal the regularities of a nation's behavior in history." As a matter of fact, these "mysterious" features "developed in a nation through centuries of coexistence, through common experience, circumstances, and surroundings"—the prominent populist writer and poet Gyula Illyés argued in the late 1930s: "Ki a magyar?" reprinted in *Itt élned kell*, vol. 2, (Budapest, 1976), p. 65.

*This paper was prepared in the fall of 1988 and presented at the Dubrovnik conference in the early summer of 1989. The big changes that had taken place in Hungary since that time seem to have given a sort of answer to the question quoted above. May I repeat the hope that the answer will prove to be favorable for the Hungarian economy and mentality.

instructions with the maximum possible exactness. In short: *public servants* were needed again.

The change began only from 1968 on, when the "new economic mechanism" began to take into account the relevance of market regulators to a planned economy, and particularly in the most recent years, when "marketing," "venture," "entrepreneurial spirit," and finally "market economy" practically became the key-words of Hungarian economic thinking.

These circumstances once again make it timely for Hungarian historians, too, as in the 1830s and 1840s and in the 1920s and 1930s, to turn to "national characterology" and to attempt to probe, with today's means and methods, how business mentality squared or contrasted with national character in Hungary's history.

The working hypothesis arrived at in this paper can be outlined as follows:

We reject the notion of a timeless national character, of a present *donnée* since time immemorial, and lasting for ever.

Yet, we do not deny that the specific features of the economic and social development of various nations brought about certain specific characteristics in their national make-up, some of which do have a significant influence on economic behavior. And we recognize that some attitudes of economic relevance at times become so permanently fixed that they survive the socio-economic conditions that have given rise to them. They may survive from the feudal past even to the present and resuscitate in our days, too, under completely different conditions, the question formulated with patriarchal naïvety by the poet Lőrincz Orczy some two hundred years ago:

> Does shameless trade befit the Magyars?
> For it may indeed corrupt our morals. . . .

The question of today will be answered by tomorrow. Let us hope that the answer will be to the benefit of both business mentality and Hungarian national character.*

National Ideology and National Character in Interwar Romania

KATHERINE VERDERY

In Romania between the two world wars, as elsewhere in Eastern Europe, the idea of a Romanian "national character" played a crucial part in consolidating and institutionalizing a national ideology. It did so primarily as a focus of debate among Romanian political and intellectual elites (although the ideological efficacy of these notions also presupposed, of course, a link with the larger Romanian population—a subject that will not be covered here). The debate concerned not the "national character" per se but a broader notion, *specificul național*, which means literally the "nationally specific" or the "national specificity," less cumbersomely rendered here as the "national essence." At issue was to establish a definition of the traits that supposedly made Romanians distinctive as a people or nation, the traits "specific" to them. Answers were couched sometimes in terms of an orientation to other cultures—are Romanians an "oriental" or an "occidental" people, or something sui generis?—and sometimes in terms of particular characteristics, such as "resignation" or "spirituality" or "adaptability."

Two features of these debates are noteworthy. First, they had stakes that were often very material: what sort of aesthetic product (novels, paintings, poems)—and therefore whose works—should be promoted, and what sort of options should Romania follow to develop its economy and polity (western-style market capitalism and democracy, or something else).[1] If it could be agreed that Roma-

Acknowledgment. I wish to thank Andrew Abbott, Benedict Anderson, Richard Fox, and a large number of Romanian historians and sociologists for their helpful comments on versions of this essay. Keith Hitchins, Paul Michelson, and Anna Watkins gave generous bibliographic assistance.

1. The same sorts of choices are being rehearsed once again in the wake of the 1989 "revolution," and the same kinds of language about Romania's national essence can be expected to enter into these resumed arguments.

nians were by nature a pastoral people, then industrial development and "cosmopolitan" fiction would have no place, and if Romanians were found to be essentially a latin, western nation whose placement within the orbit of Byzantium had always been infelicitous, then industry and parliamentary democracy were just the thing to restore the people to its proper path. Talk of the national essence, then, was a major idiom through which questions of the utmost political urgency were pursued.

Second, the debates were part of a process that was ideological, precisely because underneath their claims and arguments lay premises that were rarely brought to light. A discussion as to whether Romanians are a people of x or y sort reinforces the idea that Romanians *are* "a people," unitary in essence. It also presupposes that this people has a "personality" that can be discussed in the terms employed for discussing the character of individuals ("passive," "rational," "accommodating," "creative," "lucid," "exuberant," "spiritual," and so forth). In short, such a discussion repeatedly affirms the idea of the nation as a collective individual.[2] The nation is thereby constructed in a way that permits—indeed, demands—individuals' identification with it, and this is a crucial ingredient in its capacity to secure the sentimental attachment of its members. Without such identification and attachment, there cannot arise that national subjectivity which is the hallmark of national ideologies.

Ideas about Romanians' national essence were not new to the interwar years but had developed in the nineteenth century, through the influence of Romanticism on Romanian culture. And World War II did not bring an end to the influence of these ideas, although they were suppressed for about a decade after it.[3] The present essay treats only a small part of the process by which the notion of the national essence helped to consolidate a Romanian national ideology, but this part—the interwar period—is a particularly critical one, for participation in these debates was more intense, sustained, and broadbased than it had been before. The reasons included the new configuration of Romania, greatly enlarged by the peace treaties following World War I; the new threat of Bolshevism immediately

2. See Richard Handler, *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec* (Madison, 1988), pp. 39–47.

3. See Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceauşescu's Romania* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1991), chs. 1, 3.

3 factors infl. debates on nat. id.

across Romania's borders; and the new configuration of both the national and the global economies, into which Romania might now fit on different terms from before. The significance of these three factors for debates on the national essence will be taken up in the following section.

My objective is to indicate briefly the tenor of these debates, more fully described in the papers by Papahagi and Hitchins; to suggest how the intellectual presentation of the peasantry in them sharpened a social division between these two social groups, as well as revealing a contest among competing "defenders" of the Romanian Nation[4]; and to describe some very material effects of the debates, as they helped to institutionalize academic disciplines and thereby to create for the participants formidable redoubts in which a national discourse became so deeply embedded as to become ineradicable. In other words, I inquire into how certain intellectual arguments served as part of *the material through which thinkers and politicians affected* the balance of social forces, transforming institutional structures and class relations as they struggled in discourse to advance and defend their ideas about their people.[5] Such arguments about the Romanian Nation also served as a form of practical competition among those who considered themselves preeminent creators and defenders of the Nation, including not only different factions among the intellectuals but also other institutions that had been active in Romanians' national liberation, such as the Orthodox church.

Central to this interpretation is the view that cultural life is ineluctably also political, in the sense that intellectual debates always offer variant representations of the social world. As Pierre Bourdieu

4. To avoid the cumbersome placement of quotation marks around the word "nation" at each use, but to keep its particular meaning consistently in the mind of American readers likely to forget it, I will write Nation with a capital *N*. The particular meaning I wish to signal thereby is that the Nation is not simply a "*country*," as in the League of Nations and the usage of "nation" common to Americans; it refers to the ethnic idea of *people*, who may or may not in fact *have* a "country."

5. In the present essay I do not have the space to locate this problem, as should be done, within the literature on the sociology of knowledge. Theorists such as Marx, Mannheim, Gramsci, Foucault, and Bourdieu have offered very different arguments about the situation of intellectuals in society and their role in producing ideology. This essay takes a mixed Foucault/Gramscian approach, concerning itself, as Gramsci would, with the construction of hegemonies that may differ between "civil society" and the state, but not assuming that the intellectuals engaged in this are necessarily "organic" to the lower classes—rather, that they produce and serve power despite appearing to oppose it, as Foucault might suggest.

puts it, "Knowledge of the social world and, more precisely, the categories that make it possible, are the stakes, par excellence, of political struggle, the inextricably theoretical and practical struggle for the power to conserve or transform the social world by conserving or transforming the categories through which it is perceived."[6] Thus, debates about something like a "national essence" are contests through which intellectuals establish the social definition of what is culturally valuable—what is authentic, what scholarship is first-rate, what art is superlative, and so forth—through judgments, evaluations, and discriminations that are produced politically. To say this is not to reduce the sensibilities and motives of a nation's intellectuals, who see themselves as engaged in a quest for truth or the creation of beauty, to some base quest for power. I do not assume that *underlying* people's attachment to values, their aesthetic preferences, their standards of scholarly work, and so on is a will to power. I do assume, however, that intellectuals form a genuine attachment to certain values, preferences, and standards as against other ones, and that because values, preferences, and standards are multiple, under certain circumstances one's own will be forced into competition with other standards.

This competition and its results are political. Although the participants might not *experience* their activity as one of "struggle" or "competition," this does not lessen the fact that their activities bring alternative values into competitive relation. While the defense of one or another standard of taste or evaluation usually arises from sincere attachment to that standard, analysis should not stop with this: it must also recognize that knowledge and cultural values play a central part in maintaining and transforming social orders, and that defense of one or another value participates in this. As a result, culture and intellectual activity are *inherently* political—not *underlain* by politics, but *interwoven* with it. They are political in two different ways: in bringing together alternative values within a given intellectual domain, and in generating knowledge that participates in reproducing the wider social order.

One of the principal idioms for this competition in interwar Romania was the idiom of the national essence. Those who used it were

6. Pierre Bourdieu, "The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups," *Theory and Society* 14 (1985), p. 729.

members of political, religious, and intellectual elites. Because social actors circulated in and out of formal political office, it is difficult to separate clearly such categories as "intellectuals" and "politicians."[7] I generally use the term "intellectuals" in reference not to persons with specific occupational or educational characteristics but to a structural situation: that segment of the societal elite who did not directly exercise political or economic power—or, in Alexandrescu's words, the fraction of the dominant class that was out of office.[8] But their interlocutors were often persons *in* office, and in this sense the national discourse overflowed narrow occupational boundaries.

Political and Economic Context of the Interwar Debates

This essay primarily concerns representations of Romanian identity, leaving aside (for lack of space) both the policies whose shape such representation often aimed to influence and the socio-political environment within which the debates occurred. Nevertheless, the general reader requires a brief account of why representations of Romanianness—and the authority to speak that was implied in them—were so crucial an issue during the first few decades of the twentieth century, most especially the 1920s and 1930s. To begin with, Romania's international situation included the struggle of newly unified Germany to support its capitalist development, like France and Britain, through colonial expansion; excluded from most overseas regions by the prior activities of fellow Europeans, much of the German expansion would occur *within* Europe. The Balkan region and resource-rich Romania were particularly important in this pan-European competition, which involved not only France, Germany, and Britain, but also the earlier Habsburg and Ottoman Empires. In the different orientations of Romanian intellectuals, many having been educated in France or Germany, one could see the competition's intellectual facet. Romanian policy-makers saw another facet, as

7. For example, "intellectual" Nicolae Iorga (a historian) was briefly president of the Council of Ministers, philosopher and literary critic Titu Maiorescu was Minister of Education, as was sociologist Petre Andrei, economist Virgil Madgearu was Minister of Commerce and Industry, and a number of well-known figures from cultural life were members of parliament.

8. Sorin Alexandrescu, " 'Junimea': Discours politique et discours culturel," in J. P. Culianu, ed., *Libra: Etudes roumaines offertes à Willem Noomen* (Groningen, 1983).

each country attempted to influence the Romanian economy toward or away from preserving its agrarian export structure. Although in global comparison with England and France the Austro-German presence remained weak, in interwar Romania German interests triumphed, securing it within Germany's economic orbit by the late 1930s. These international events help to account for the salience of representations of the West in Romanians' national discourse and for their attention to western models of economic development.

Second, and related to this, postwar Romanian leaders faced complex decisions concerning the economy: how best to increase domestic capital accumulation without adding to the already huge foreign debt from war reparations. Arguments raged as to whether industrialization was the answer, and how best to achieve it. Higher industrial capacity in territories newly acquired after the war made industrial development a real possibility for Romania, but its financing and the problem of adequate markets for its products remained major obstacles. In the event, part of the solution was the *dirigisme* that arose elsewhere in the region (and that had marked earlier development there as well, particularly in Hungary). The state assumed large responsibility for economic growth, the state apparatus swelled correspondingly, and dispensations from the state budget became a prime source of revenue for many sectors of activity—not least among them the production of culture. This state support of cultural activity importantly influenced the national essence debates among intellectuals, who in their striving to define the Nation were implicitly competing for funds to produce a suitable culture for it. Since the government tended to support science over the humanities, one should not be surprised that those humanists who promoted the national essence in art were in effect arguing for a form of "cultural protectionism."

Third, the aftermath of World War I vastly complicated Romania's internal situation, from the national point of view. Postwar territorial changes had nearly doubled its territory and population, fulfilling nationalist dreams but also bringing tremendous problems of reorganization and unification. Unification of the fiscal, jural, religious, and administrative apparatuses—already an overwhelming task—was impeded by the sizable national minorities of Germans and Hungarians who now resided within Romania; the Hungarians waited impatiently for restitution of the old territorial borders, which would

deliver them from Romanian rule. Expansion of the educational system was one means by which Romania's state-makers sought to increase the possibilities of assimilation, and this meant expanding the state bureaucracy as well as the intellectual stratum. Thus, Romanian representations of national and territorial unity took place against the constant threat of territorial dismemberment. The threat was realized in 1940 when the Soviet Union annexed Bessarabia and Hitler gave northern Transylvania back to Hungary.

The realities of Bolshevism in the Soviet Union complicated the situation further. Fear that it might spread across the border became a constant of Romanian political discourse, sharpening anti-Russian sentiment as well and impeding "orientalist" identifications. With the Revolution, Russia became more than ever the "barbarous East" many would now oppose with pro-western arguments. Moreover, the Communist International openly supported minority struggles for national liberation even where these jeopardized the integrity of already-constituted states. Romania was labeled an imperialist creation and oppressor of its newly acquired minorities. This challenge to its sovereignty over the new territories caused the government to ban the Communist party as a deadly peril to the country's unity. As a result, the political left lost its capacity to contribute to defining the Nation, and the national discourse was effectively delivered into the hands of the right and center. This rightist advantage in defining the Nation, combined with the previous century's history in which national ideology had achieved so important a place in both politics and popular sentiment, contributed importantly to the rise of an indigenous fascism in Romania that had its echoes even in Ceauşescu's Communist regime.

These conjoined problems—of economic development and neocolonialism, institutional reform and integration, and the world socialist movement as it affected Romania's internal politics—provided an environment rich in possibilities for change in the social situation of various groups. They also provided a much enlarged stratum of intellectual aspirants to influence and social position. A major idiom for discussing the alternatives was talk about the Nation and its identity.[9] In the new conditions of Romanian society, this

9. The words used in these discussions varied. The word for "people" (*popor*) means both the ethnic "people" and people in the sense of "masses." The former is usually the

discourse acquired both greater scope and greater urgency; an exponential rise in the already large volume of writings on the Nation shows how widely the urgency was perceived.

Defining the Nation between East and West

A Romanian scholar has observed that "from the middle of the last century, that is, since the beginning of modern Romania, systematically every two to four decades the drama of alternatives has been unleashed. The problem posed during it was, invariably, what path of development to follow. The dispute would flare up overnight and last a good while, then subside in favor of one of the camps. . . . But then some major socio-political event would unleash the confrontation again in a new phase of this unbreakable cycle."[10] One participant in that cycle remarked, "West or East? Europe or the Balkans, urban civilization or the rural spirit?—[since 1860] the questions are still the same."[11] The questions posed in this "drama of alternatives" were central to discussions that produced and perpetuated the Romanian national ideology. At the heart of the discussions were debates concerning the national essence of Romanians as a people.

The debates on the national essence began in the mid 1800s and spread through virtually all political and intellectual discourse. From 1900 on, there was scarcely a politician, regardless of party, and scarcely a thinker, whether in economics, psychology, sociology, ethnography, philosophy, literature, or art, who did not directly or indirectly have something to say about Romanians' essential character. The preconditions of the debate lay in Romantic notions about the "spirit" of different peoples (*Volksgeist*), each people being thought to have its own special and original "genius" and its mission in the world. These notions entered widely into Romanians' intellectual

sense intended, but it is shadowed (usually helpfully) by the latter. The words for "nation" are usually either *națiune*, whose sense is clear, or *neam*, the most common (*neamul românesc*). *Neam* comes from a Finno-Ugrian (and possibly Turkic) root *nem-* having the multiple meanings of kinship group, tribe, and people or nation. It has no good English translation. My discussion reduces these meanings to the word "nation."

10. Z. Ornea, *Tradiționalism și modernitate în deceniul al treilea* (Bucharest, 1980), p. 100.

11. Mihail Sebastian, cited in Irina Livezeanu, "Pages from a Troubled Book: An Episode in Romanian Literature," *Cross Currents* 3 (1984), p. 313.

exchanges. They also entered into the lexicon of politics and political economy, through a major tenet of Herderian Romanticism: the idea that a clear understanding of the national essence is prerequisite to formulating a politics suited to the Nation, for if politics follows interests that have *not* taken account of the people's essential character, the people will suffer, its natural mission will remain unfulfilled, and the policy will necessarily fail. Therefore, arguments about the national essence included policy questions about whether to preserve or to change what were seen as Romania's traditional social, economic, political, and cultural forms, and if they should change, in what direction and to what extent.

These arguments continued already venerable practices—different, of course, in form, context, and meaning—that went back to the 1600s. Despite the differences in context and meaning, however, one basic question was common to earlier and later efforts to define the Romanian Nation: is the Romanian character occidental or oriental and what is the basis for that affinity? Focusing on answers to this basic question will help to convey a sense of the debate, even if much important detail is thus left out. There were three principal positions on the matter of claimed affinities, with countless minor variations in each of them. One, which I call the pro-western or westernizing position, viewed Romanians as the heirs to and participants in a western tradition descended from Rome. This view emerged from a historiographical interpretation that found Romanian origins in the Roman legions that had entered the territory around A.D. 100, defeating the native Dacians. A second, pro-oriental position affiliated Romanians with the traditions of the East. This position had both a strictly religious variant—Romanians are oriental because of their ties to the Byzantine empire and Eastern Orthodoxy—and a more generally historical one—Romanians are oriental from their eastern-derived Thracian forebears, more ancient than the Romans. The Bolshevik Revolution somewhat diminished the appeal of an eastern identification, polarizing the argument between westernizers and partisans of the third view, indigenism or autochthonism. This view emphasized local values over affinities with either East or West and regarded the native Dacians as Romanians' principal ancestor. Indigenists came in great variety; some of them leaned ever so slightly eastward or westward, while still emphasizing qualities

they thought peculiar to Romanians and wished to protect from the corrupting effects of imported civilizations, particularly the western one. This spectrum of views parallels similar options in many other countries of the world, among them the debates between Russian "Westernizers" and "Slavophiles."

The positions are best illustrated through the words of some of the participants themselves. First, a pro-oriental voice:

> If the mission of the Romanian people is to create a culture after its image and likeness, this implies as well how its orientation should be resolved. Whoever recommends an orientation toward the West speaks nonsense. *Orientation* contains within itself the notion of *Orient* and means directing ourselves toward the Orient, in accord with the Orient. Altars face toward the Orient; the icons of the hearth face us from the Orient; the peasant who kneels in his field faces toward the Orient. Everywhere it is said that light comes from the East. And for us, who find ourselves geographically in the Orient and who, through our Orthodox religion, hold to the truths of the eastern world, there can be no other orientation than toward the Orient, that is, toward ourselves. . . . Westernization means the negation of our orientalness; Europeanizing nihilism means the negation of our creative potential.[12]

This same author often voiced the opinion that the contemplative style characteristic of "orientals" made Romanians unsuited to industrial work.

Next, an indigenist who often played up the oriental connection:

> We think ourselves merely latins—lucid, rational, temperate, lovers of classical form—but willy-nilly we are more than that. A significant percent of Slavic and Thracian blood seethes in our veins. The Romanian spirit may be dominated by latinity, a peaceful and cultured force, but we have also a rich latent Thraco-Slavic foundation, exuberant and vital, which, no matter how much we oppose it, sometimes detaches itself from the nether realms and rises up powerfully in our consciousness. Our latin symmetry and harmony are often battered by a storm that rages in the Romanian spirit at near-metaphysical depths; and this storm is the revolt of our non-latin soul. . . Why should we violate our true nature, corset ourselves in a formula of latin clarity,

12. Nichifor Crainic, "Sensul tradiției," *Gândirea* 9 (1929), p. 3.

> when so many other possibilities for development lie within us in that barbarian unconscious?[13]

Next, a "pure" indigenist firmly opposed to western influences and to eastern affiliations as well (not evident in this quotation):

> Our whole social life is shot through with illusions. We have adopted civil and political laws unsuited to our traditions; we have organized a public education useless to the large majority of the people; we have imitated the bourgeois technique of economic production in which neither the qualities of our people nor the wealth of our country can bear fruit; we have done everything in our power to falsify the traditions and the aptitudes given us by nature. . . [thinking] ourselves obligated to be to Europe's taste. . . . For better than a century, the Romanian people has not been faithful to itself. Let us have an end to experiments with laws for the [so-called] "Belgium of the Orient."[14]

In contrast, here is a moderate westernizer:

> In the twentieth century, history has set Romanians the following problem: will Romania continue to be a semi-asiatic, oriental country or will it enter the ranks of European peoples and European culture. This problem has been answered by history. For various reasons, Romania could not exempt itself from the European influence [that] penetrated into our country. It penetrated through the very fact of its superiority.[15]

While this writer seems *resigned* to accepting Western influence, another openly *embraces* it, envisioning the people's deliverance in such an embrace:

> Under the banner of Orthodoxy and tradition some persons flourish the ideal—static and immobilized in hieratic byzantine-muscovite forms—of a primitive [Romanian] culture without development or prospects. *Our* cultural ideal [in contrast] is dynamic, eager for growth, renewal, and fructification. . . . We mean to propagate a sense of culture that is European. Our light comes from the West. We see our deliverance in the occidentalization of this country, many of whose vital organs are putrefying even before it has reached matu-

13. Lucian Blaga, "Revolta fondului nostru nelatin," *Gândirea* 1 (1921), pp. 181–182.
14. Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, *Românismul: Catehismul unei noi spiritualități* (Bucharest, 1936), pp. 31, 35, 118.
15. Garabet Ibrăileanu, *Spiritul critic în cultura românească* (Iași, 1909), p. 261.

rity. Balkanism, our cherished and idealized orientalness. . . now shelters all the brigands who have impeded political purification and opposed uplifting the people from the cultural cesspool in which it flounders. . . . [We seek] the affirmation of our genius and specific character in the forms of European culture, in the harmonious and shining framework of the culture of the West. . . . We have faith that soap, comfort and urbanism, the telegraph and civil law in no way threaten the purity of our race.[16]

Even this cursory exposure to some views on the national essence reveals the tensions among peasantism and urban cosmopolitanism, stasis and dynamism, agriculture and industrialization, all summarized in the contrast between affiliation with Orient or Occident. The preoccupation with this contrast betrays an elite transfixed between more powerful countries and larger hegemonic discourses. That one of them—the western one—has overtaken the other is visible in the "orientalist" representations given the East even by its partisans.[17] A final example will highlight the western stereotypes in terms of which East and West are presented:

All of occidental civilization can be reduced to a single phrase: *an aptitude for creation* . . . The psychology of the Orient is exactly the opposite. It reduces ordinarily to *passive resignation*. The Occidental imposes himself on the environment, the Oriental submits to it. . . . Fatalism. . . seems to him the only solution. . . . If we observe closely our people's habits, institutions, way of reacting and of living,,, we will easily conclude that its psychology enters into a conduct equidistant between the activist voluntarism of the occident and the fatalistic passivity of the orient.[18]

Participants in the debate speak in terms of active and passive, will and fatalism, and so forth; nearly all see the West as rational, ordered, and productive and the East as irrational, stagnant, impulsive, and disorderly; and they depict the East as, at best, a realm of *spiritual* values, in contrast to the *material* civilization of the West. Only the evaluation of these alternatives differs, the pro-orientalists decrying the materialism of the West and preferring eastern values

16. Eugen Filotti, "Gândul nostru," *Cuvântul liber* 1 (1924, ser. 2), pp. 2–4.
17. See Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York, 1978).
18. Mihai Ralea, *Intre două lumi* (Bucharest, 1943), pp. 103, 104–05, 106–07; emphasis in original.

while the westernizers disdain oriental passivity and irrationality in favor of a more dynamic and rational social order. The constellation of views that emerges in the arguments reveals the difficulties of defining a national voice in a period of western political, economic, and ideological hegemony.

Conflict and Alliance within the Elite: The Role of the Peasantry in Images of the Nation

Many social processes were potentially occurring within and by means of the debates on the national essence. I will concentrate here on two of these processes: the debates as an important locus for representing changed class and intraclass relations, and their place in the struggle among members of religious and secular institutions, each claiming preeminence in defending the Nation. These two processes are especially visible in the way participants defined the Nation in relationship to the peasantry. A major concern of the period, the "peasant problem" had several roots relating to changes in the country's class structure. Three of the most important were the rising tide of populism throughout the whole region, the devastation wrought by a massive rebellion of Romanian peasants in 1907, and—with the enactment of universal male suffrage—the new imperative of incorporating into party platforms and public appeals a peasantry that had been largely ignored in most parts of the country.[19]

Peasants and the Self-Constitution of an Intellectual Stratum

In these circumstances, competing images of the peasantry formed part of the conflicts among different sectors of the elite. The different images entered variously into the political and cultural programs of one or another faction, all of whom presented their ideas as a defense of the Nation and of the peasantry that constituted so large a majority of it. People accused one another of betraying the Nation, its national mission, and/or its peasant masses, invoking the three elements interchangeably.[20] The agenda of this discussion was set

19. In Transylvania, where prior to 1918 the peasantry had formed the sole base of support for aspiring Romanian delegates to the Hungarian parliament, the elite had accorded the peasantry some attention, but elsewhere in Romania this was not the case.

20. E.g., Ilarie Dobridor, "Tradarea intelectualilor," *Gând românesc* 3 (1935); Virgil N. Madgearu, "Intelectualii şi ţărănismul," *Ideea europeană* 3 (1921).

by a group of indigenists, who in political economy advocated the idea of a "peasant state" free of industrial artifice, and in literature insisted that the national essence must be sought in the purity of peasant souls. These connections among the peasantry, a pastoral program, and the national essence suited indigenism's rejection of western-style industrial and urban life, which can be seen in the following:

> What state politics do we now propose? . . . A wholly revolutionary politics, . . . [which] recommends: decoupling us from world politics; closing us up in our own borders as completely as possible; taking into consideration what is realistic for Romania; provisionally reducing our standard of living to a realistic level; and laying the foundations for a Romanian State of peasant structure, the only form in which we can truly live according to the indications of our nature and the only one we can implant that will enable the powers of our race truly and completely to bear fruit.[21]

Not everyone regarded the peasants as the Nation's very soul, but even so, concern to represent the peasantry and set up programs for it was widespread and formed part of the debates over the Nation's identity and its future. For example, one quasi-westernizer, distinguishing his views from some of the "peasantist" writers, observed:

> They criticize new forms, regret the old order, and admire the patriarchal peasants as a remnant of the times of [princes] Michael and Stephen. And they idealize this peasant precisely because he was so backward and removed from the civilized life of Europe. We see something else in the peasantry: a peasant who is a social being, who is poor, who needs reforms and raising up. Transforming him presupposes the complete occidentalization of the country, the complete destruction of old forms. Thus, in opposition to the conservatives and literary peasantists we must defend new forms and push for universal suffrage, . . . [so as to make our peasants] into *citizens*. Our ideal has not been the picturesque, illiterate peasant with long hair and a wide belt who sits in his poetic hut all day playing his pan-pipe. Our ideal has been the peasant dressed in European clothes. . . , with a brick house and barn, who can read. . . ; the peasant who lives in a

21. Nae Ionescu, *Roza vânturilor* (Bucharest, 1937), pp. 286–87.

> village with electricity and plows his field with improved machinery or works in factories nearby.[22]

For "westernizers" just as for indigenists, as this quotation shows vividly, images of the peasantry and programs for its uplifting intersected with ideas about the Romanian national essence.

These proposals concerning the peasantry entailed not just alternative political programs, however: they also brought together different groups of intellectuals claiming the right to speak for a peasantry that was not encouraged to speak for itself. That is, representing the peasants served to separate them more firmly from their self-proclaimed spokesmen, by creating distance between the two groups and by arrogating from the peasantry the right to speak on its own behalf.[23] Two common tactics in the rhetoric of representation show this clearly. First, peasants were denied equality with their spokesmen by being presented as belonging to a *different time*—a common device for creating the image of the "primitive" as a lesser being.[24] Here, for example, are two indigenist partisans of the peasantry who saw it as inhabiting a space untouched by time:

> The village has not let itself be tempted and drawn into the "history" made by others over our heads. It has preserved itself chastely, untouched in the autonomy with which poverty and mythology have endowed it, and awaits the time when it will serve as the sure foundation of an authentically Romanian history.[25]

22. Garabet Ibrăileanu, "Ce este poporanismul?" *Viaţa românească* 17 (1925), pp. 143–44. Behind such proposals as this was concern about the spread of socialism within impoverished peasant ranks. The validity of this concern was revealed clearly by the reaction of peasants mobilized in the Romanian army on the eastern front, following the Russian revolution: peasant demands for land were among the factors that led the king himself to visit the front and to promise a land reform, so as to enspirit the troops and keep them fighting.

23. The effects of a discursive interest in the peasantry can be compared with the effects of similar discursive interest in women, in other times and places: it distanced and silenced them, and it rendered them an open field for intellectuals and the state to colonize. See, for example, Mary Poovey, " 'Scenes of an Indelicate Character': The Medical 'Treatment' of Victorian Women," *Representations* 14 (1986), and Joan Scott, " 'Ouvrière, Mot Impie, Sordide': Women Workers in the Discourse of French Political Economy, 1840–1860," in her *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York, 1988).

24. See Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York, 1983).

25. Lucian Blaga, "Elogiul satului românesc," in *Discursuri de recepţie la Academia Română* (Bucharest, 1980 [1937]), p. 258.

> [The peasant remains] on the same patch of soil, generation after generation, confined in the immobility of the same destiny, while outside his radius everything is in perpetual change. . . . Peasant life has no history. It absorbs itself in nature. But like the seeds that lie in nature's breast, like the minerals hidden in the folds of the earth, the embers of possibility smoulder in this primitive life.[26]

In a celebrated quarrel between the writer of the first of these two quotations, philosopher Lucian Blaga, and one of his critics, sociologist Henri Stahl, the latter drew attention to the paternalism buried in such rhetoric by complaining that Blaga had never set foot in a village to find out what real peasants actually thought about anything.[27]

The second tactic by which images of the peasantry sharpened a class division was exaltation of Reason and Science by the intellectuals, in their programs for reform of the countryside and progress for the Nation. In exalting Reason and Science, reformers argued fervently for elimination of the breeding-grounds of ignorance and superstition so widespread among the peasantry. The creators of science and knowledge, intellectuals were to become teachers—and thus saviors—of the Nation. Among the enthusiasts of such arguments were not only the westernizers but many indigenists. All of them used a language impressive above all for its paternalism and condescension, and thereby the chasm widened between the peasants and those who claimed to speak in their defense. Through these and many similar appeals, persons involved in defining the Romanian Nation and claiming its defense also confirmed the grounds of their own legitimation: acceptance of the central value of knowledge.[28] Behind the celebrations of peasant innocence and the many

26. Nichifor Crainic, *Puncte cardinale în haos* (Bucharest, 1936), p. 89.

27. See below for details.

28. See also Zygmunt Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Post-Modernity, and Intellectuals* (Ithaca, 1987), p. 18. The Romanian sociologist Mihai Dinu Gheorghiu is currently developing an ingenious argument about other ways in which the intellectuals put the peasantry to use toward glorifying intellectual values. He sees the debates about populism and the national essence in literature as forming and seeking to monopolize an internal market for symbolic capital via protectionist measures, just as protectionist politicians were forming an internal market for financial capital and material goods. Different groups of writers sought to eliminate their opponents from the field by insisting that their own creations better represented the national or peasant essence, while others were betraying the Nation by importing foreign values. Gheorghiu applies this argument to both literati and other fields of intellectual endeavor, most notably sociology. See Mihai Dinu Gheorghiu, "La stratégie

proposals for reform of the countryside, then, lay a celebration of the peasantry's elite patrons, set firmly apart on the far side of a class barrier.

State-Making, Intellectuals, and the Church

The competition among intellectual defenders of the Nation also entailed conflicting views about the proper relation of Nation and state. Historically, intellectuals have sometimes served to strengthen the state by calling for it to intervene to solve social problems.[29] In other cases they have set themselves at a distance from it.[30] In the Romanian case, some participants in the national-essence debates worked to strengthen the state and its sphere of activity, and others saw it as incapable of an adequate defense of the Nation. Some intellectuals placed themselves above state-makers, and thus in potential opposition to them, by arguing that politicians should be mere executors of the plans that intellectuals arrived at scientifically.[31] Still others encouraged open defection from state purposes.

For example, one contributor to the leftist newspaper *The Society of Tomorrow* wrote an urgent appeal entitled "The Defense of the Nation" to argue for the vital matter of strengthening "the spiritual resistance of our people, which should be the daily preoccupation of our leaders."[32] Ordinarily, he said, the moral and social education basic to such strengthening is the obligation of the state. But the Romanian state seemed lately to have forgotten its responsibility to the Nation, having become a vehicle for exploiting the people rather than a truly ethnic organization. Its leaders seemed not to care whether the people were satisfied or not, whether the national treasure was being wasted or used to good effect. The Romanian state, he claimed, was acting as if its only concern were to build up its

critique de la revue 'Viaţa românească' (1906–1916)," in Al. Zub, ed., *Culture and Society* (Bucharest, 1985), and his *Scena literaturii* (Bucharest, 1987).

29. See Anson Rabinbach, "The European Science of Work: The Economy of the Body at the End of the Nineteenth Century," in *Work in France: Representations, Meaning, Organization, and Practice*, Steven Laurence Kaplan and Cynthia J. Koepp, eds., (Ithaca, 1986), and Joan Scott, "Ouvrière."

30. Laura Engelstein, "Morality and the Wooden Spoon: Russian Doctors View Syphilis, Social Class, and Sexual Behavior, 1890–1905," *Representations* 14 (1986).

31. Gheorghiu, *Scena literaturii*, p. 11.

32. N. Ghiulea, "Apărarea naţiunii," *Societatea de mâine* 3 (1926), p. 509.

unlimited power; it was not an ethical entity and did not work to raise up the Nation but, rather, to plunder it and to serve the interests of its enemies.[33] If, as this person argued, the state had abdicated its responsibility to the Nation, who then remained to defend the people's interests? Those who served its moral and social education, of course, and had created a peasant people in need of supervision and reform. The view he advocated thereby gave a special place not to the state as the Nation's principal defender but to intellectuals.

Others, however, and probably the majority, promoted a greater role for the state. Indigenists often called upon the state to preserve the peasants' blessed innocence, for example; westernizers and other reformers urged it to raise up the masses with educational programs. While these invocations varied in the extent of state supervision and control being sought, all of them strengthened the state by inviting it in and giving it work to do—work that would create the conditions within which a national essence could flourish. Among the most elaborate and consequential of such invitations is the one that lay hidden in arguments about the place of the national essence in art, particularly the arguments of the populists around the publication *Viaţa românească* (*Romanian Life*).[34] Arguing that the only acceptable Romanian literature and culture ought to be based on ethnic themes, centered on the peasantry, these people were offering a prescription for "cultural protectionism."[35] It presupposed an audience that was Romanian and protected a cultural production that was indigenous. Instead of furthering the circulation on Romania's internal market of the foreign cultural products that already dominated it, insisted these cultural populists, instead of *imitating* western culture, Romanians must *create their own*.

Something like this course was argued by nearly all of the indigenists in the debates about the national essence, as well as by some quasi-westernizers. Everywhere one finds articles from this period arguing that Romanians must have their *own* intellectual production, must educate the peasants with things that *Romanians* produce rather than with the products of cultural imperialism. Some indigenist groups campaigned to have a tax placed on all foreign

33. Ibid.
34. See the paper by Papahagi in this volume.
35. See Gheorghiu, "Stratégie critique."

books.[36] Pro-orientalist Crainic, too, complaining that pro-western "intellectualists" were advocating cultural consumption, observed:

> It is an attitude different from ours. Traditionalism demands a culture creative of autochthonous values, our own cultural creation. This does not exclude cultural consumption but implies it, according it the subordinate status it ought to have. . . . A people's purpose in this world is not to [consume] but to create, to create what others have not because no other people has that particular creation in its nature.[37]

In other words, those who advocated this course were advocating a political program to protect the conditions of *local* cultural production and the accumulation of *native* cultural capital, as against the westernizers who appeared willing to flood the cultural market with "foreign imports," without regard for the native cultural base.[38] Just as the chief problem for political economy was, What conditions should govern Romania's agricultural and industrial production?, the chief problem for many of these literati, philosophers, and other thinkers was, What conditions should govern the production of culture, and what role should the state have in creating those conditions?

The circumstances in which such argument was occurring were, of course, the circumstances of a small and undercapitalized country trying to create the instruments for its advancement, while groups differently placed in society argued over how that might best be done. It was a society whose weak tax base virtually necessitated foreign borrowing to support the cost of a state bureaucracy, "oversized" because state employment gave more certain livelihood than economic activity.[39] Even so, the bureaucracy could not absorb all the people its educational system produced, nor pay them adequately despite disbursing 56 percent of the total budget for the salaries of state employees.[40] The result was a struggle for the positions and the resources that existed, efforts by producers of culture to protect

36. Ileana Vrancea, *E. Lovinescu: Critic literar* (Bucharest, 1965), p. 104.

37. Crainic, "Sensul traditiei," p. 2.

38. This is the argument of Gheorghiu, "Stratégie critique."

39. Andrew C. Janos, "Modernization and Decay in Historical Perspective: The Case of Romania," in Kenneth Jowitt, ed., *Social Change in Romania, 1860–1940* (Berkeley, 1978), pp. 107–08.

40. Ibid.

themselves from the vagaries of market competition, and continued calls upon the state to do more for culture.[41]

For humanist intellectuals, the struggle was all the more intense given that in the years after the war there was a general drift of state funds toward science and economics, which could contribute to rationalizing the economy that politicians had determined to industrialize. Saizu describes this context, in which resources for literati, philosophers, theologians, perhaps even ethnographers and historians, began losing ground to those for economics, sociology, chemistry, and other hard and applied sciences.[42] Between 1922 and 1927 the Romanian Society of Science reorganized all its hard-science sections; several proposals were floated for reorganizing the Romanian Academy to direct all scientific research at the national level. In 1934 it was proposed that the mission of the Academy until that time—encouraging cultural activity—be reduced to simply rewarding works of high quality with prizes, and that the Academy's more active guidance go to directing scientific work.[43] The new emphasis on progress in science led to the founding of research institutes separate from university teaching, intended (in one scholar's words) to be "the most powerful fortifications for defending the nation and for undreamed-of increases in the forces of endurance of our nation and state."[44]

Also struggling for a share in resources were spokesmen for the Orthodox church. This included theologians such as Crainic and other clerics, spiritual descendants of the eighteenth-century "fathers" of Romanian national ideology. Interwar conditions also subjected the church, that self-proclaimed ancient bastion of Romanian identity, to greater strains on its well-being. Not only did it undergo internal upheaval from the union with differently organized

41. See, e. g., Gr. Antipa, *Paralizia generală progresivă a economiei naţionale şi remedierea ei* (Bucharest, 1923), pp. 3–4; Irina Livezeanu, The Politics of Culture in Greater Romania: Nation-building and Student Nationalism, 1918–1927. (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Michigan, 1986), p. 206; I. Saizu, "Relaţia ştiinţă-societate în gîndirea românească interbelică," *Revista de istorie* 34 (1981).

42. Saizu, "Relaţia."

43. Ibid.

44. Gr. Antipa, *Necesitatea institutelor de cercetări ştiinţifice pentru satisfacerea nevoilor actuale ale ţării* (Bucharest, 1940), p. 7.

Romanian Orthodox churches in the new provinces, but it and the conditions of its financing were placed more firmly under state control. The landed properties and levels of funding set for Romania's major creeds were relatively more advantageous for other faiths than for Orthodoxy.[45] This was true also for the salaries fixed for priests and the subventions allotted for specific purposes.[46] Protestant denominations were making a concerted evangelizing effort in Romania during these same years. Arguments arose in Parliament between Orthodox bishops and the Minister of Religion, the former complaining about the level of church funds from the state—seen as evidence of insufficient love for the Nation, inattention to the people's soul, and a threat to Romanian civilization—whereas the latter pointed to the state's exhausted budget and the numerous claims on its finances, inadequate to the bishops' requests.[47]

Under these circumstances, it is scarcely surprising that persons associated with the church sought to defend it by arguments that inserted it into the heart of the Nation. As the paper by Hitchins in this volume shows, one of the most influential views on the national essence emerged from the "Orthodoxist" camp, led by philosopher-theologian Nichifor Crainic, which held that Romanianness was quintessentially tied to the Orthodox faith. This argument infuriated a host of other writers—largely secular intellectuals who also fed from the same state trough and who made the rejoinder that because Orthodoxy was not restricted to Romanians, it could not define their national identity. Some even went so far as to claim that

45. V. Nistor, "Les cultes minoritaires et l'église orthodoxe roumaine dans le nouveau budget de la Roumanie," *Revue de Transilvanie* 2 (1935), pp. 11–12. According to church historian M. Păcurariu, the 1927 Concordat among Romania's churches had the effect of strengthening Roman Catholicism relative to Orthodoxy, giving Catholic parishes larger properties than they had had in Habsburg times; and it exchanged the expropriations of the agrarian reform (the Orthodox church by and large did not have properties sizable enough to be expropriated) for rents that were worth more than the straight compensation paid other landlords. It is Păcurariu's conclusion that the Liberal government brought the Romanian Orthodox church to a position of inferiority with respect to the other religions (Mircea Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, vol. 3 (Bucharest, 1981), pp. 401–05.

46. Nistor, "Cultes" pp. 25–26; Editura Institutului Biblic şi de Misiune Ortodoxa, *Istoria Bisericii Romîne: Manuel pentru Institutele Teologice*, vol. 2 (Bucharest, 1957). p. 606.

47. This discussion took place between Minister of Religion Lăpedatu and the bishop of Rîmnic and the archbishop of Moldavia; discussion reported in *Monitorul Oficial, Şedinţe*, February 13, 1924, pp. 450–72.

the actions of the church had impoverished the people and impeded its mission.[48] Directly attacking the claims of churchmen and others that religious institutions had preserved the existence of Romanians through centuries of deculturating foreign rule, such writers sought to wrest defense of the Nation from the grip of the church. For example:

> The Orthodox Church is and has been perpetuated as foreign. Faith manifests itself in acts; the Orthodox faith is not represented by a single Romanian Orthodox act in a single domain of religious application: miracles, proselytism, oratory, writing, propaganda, sacrifices. Not a single initiative begun under the sign of a religious sentiment [has been Romanian in its character].[49]

Such writers sought to negate a special role for the church in protecting the national essence by seeing the church as a "foreign import." Other forms of disqualifying it included intellectuals' defense of Reason, which entailed accusing the church of fostering the people's ignorance by mystical and irrational practices. These critics implied that although clerics might have founded the national ideology, only their secular offspring—intellectuals, the builders of science and knowledge—could be entrusted with the Nation's interests in the modern world where Reason, not superstition, reigns. The Nation's intellectual guardians sometimes even arrogated unto their own projects the language of the church: consider the title and agenda of philosopher Constantin Rădulescu-Motru's 1936 *Romanianism: Catechism of a New Spirituality,* which aimed to develop a national ideology resting on Reason, as against the mysticism of religion.

The language of the competition in which all were locked emphasized different claims to represent the interests and the "proper" cultural values of the Romanian Nation. Indeed, this is precisely what was at issue in arguing over Romanian identity: whose definition would prove the most efficacious in claiming public attention and, perhaps, resources? Whose cultural program was "really" serving *foreign* interests rather than Romanian interests? Whose journals

48. See, e.g., Onisifor Ghibu, "Rostul politic al vizitei patriarhului dela Ierusalim în România," *Societatea de mâine* 1 (1924).
49. Tudor Arghezi, "Epistola Dlui Sabin Drăgoi," *Bilete de papagal* 246 (1928), pp. 1–2.

did or did not deserve state subsidies? In 1931, Rădulescu-Motru launched an attack on the mysticoid tendencies of the Orthodoxists and demanded that their journals no longer receive government subventions.[50] Different views about the national essence tended to become identified with particular publications, which then promoted the names and work of their contributors; set up meetings and activities; solicited subscriptions, ads, and subsidies—sometimes obtained from the government or from banks. The pool of resources to support all this intellectual activity was shallow and the aspirants many. Definitions of the Nation and its essence helped to shoulder others aside, to show them unworthy of representing the Nation. Accusations of "foreign borrowing" and "imitation" were crucial instruments in this contest, as not only indigenists but others as well found it necessary to battle their competitors with the idea that foreignness could not serve the national essence:

> The traditionalism of Mr. Crainic takes its nomad's tent toward the Orient and byzantinism, invoking in support of autochthonous traditionalism Keyserling, Unamuno, and Berdiaeff. Here we see the sophistry of this tradition of imported rhetoric, of imitation through the panslavic apocalypse. . . . [Crainic's] tradition has excommunicated us for our adherence to the Latin idea, only to protect us with Unamuno and Berdiaeff; it has strangled our Latin reality only to suffocate us in orientalist weeds, and it has crucified us for negating the people, only to affirm the people for us in Byzantium.[51]

The chief contenders for defense of the Nation, then, were the church, the state, and various intellectuals, each striving to redefine its relationship with the others through alliances and excommunications that pivoted around the definition of the national essence and its proper defense. The peasantry was a major actor in those contests, sometimes providing the vehicle for articulating alternative programs for the Nation. Sometimes, too, the challenge posed by the peasant masses united elites in the urgent political task of imposing discipline and order on the dangerous rabble, in the name of serving the Nation's larger interests.[52]

50. Ornea, *Traditionalism*, p. 209.
51. Pompiliu Constantinescu, "Creştinismul folcloric," *Kalende* 1:5 (1929), pp. 134–35.
52. Bauman, *Interpreters*, p. 78.

In discussions among these contenders, persons acting from within state and church had an institutional position in which to base their defense. In the following section I will ask how the third group, the intellectuals, achieved something comparable by means of the national discourse, enabling them to voice their ongoing concerns for the Nation whether or not individuals among them entered the halls of power. That is, I seek to show how the national ideas through which intellectuals expressed their values and pursued social contests came to take on a life of their own, entering thereby into the very constitution of political processes. I argue that the debates themselves helped to produce the structures within which intellectuals might continue to defend the Nation against those who claimed to serve its interests through state politics, but arguably did not. That is, the debates actively created part of the material infrastructure that would sustain the defense of the Nation, at the same time that they further solidified the Romanian national ideology.

Intellectuals and the Disciplines

When the Romanian state was formed, between 1859 and 1881, there grew up with it those institutional structures associated with the consolidation of any state of the "modern" type: educational institutions such as universities, with a growing number of departments and chairs; a national academy on the French model; a variety of cultural organizations and multitudinous publications, some of them with state subventions; a State Archive; national museums; and so on. Intellectuals unwittingly entrenched themselves within these newly given institutional settings through arguments about the Nation and its "essence." In part by means of these arguments, academic disciplines were consolidated and differentiated, university chairs and publication subventions and other resources competed for, and institutional personalities strengthened and sharpened in ways that would not always suit the governing political party. The very material of the discourse on nationality therefore provided a means for disciplinary proliferation. I do not argue that the national discourse *caused* this proliferation, for disciplines were being established in all western

countries during this period—and not always through nationalism.[53] I argue only that the medium within which this larger process was occurring in the Romanian context was the language of nationalism (rather than a language invoking science or social progress, for example), and this fact had consequences for the relation of scholarly activity to defense of the Nation.

The process of disciplinary growth and differentiation in Romania included claims and counterclaims that one or another discipline had superior capacity to treat aspects of the national identity. Typical of such claims is the following rationale one writer offered to promote a discipline of ethnopsychology distinct from ethnology: "Ethnology has to do only with *externalities:* distributions, kinship, migrations, customs; it does not occupy itself with the residues all these changes leave in the spirit of the people, with the psychological substrate" (important matters that a discipline of ethnopsychology would treat).[54] In making claims of this sort, scholars were not consciously and intentionally manipulating the national idea in the interests of expanding their turf, cutting into the space hitherto monopolized by historiography and philology as the Nation's principal guardians. If their turf did expand nonetheless, this was most probably unintended and shows the material consequences of the national ideology Romanian intellectuals were producing. Lacking the space to illustrate this process extensively, I will give only a few examples from sociology in relation to other disciplines.[55]

The Nation and debates about it could figure in the definitional struggles within any given discipline. In interwar Romanian sociology, one observer identifies three camps: the national-reformist, the national cultural, and the extreme right, their leaders arguing among themselves from different cities on both scientific and political grounds. "Romanian sociology. . . was the terrain of an implicit and explicit ideological battle centering on the problem not so much

53. I am indebted to Andrew Abbott for this observation.

54. Mihai Eminescu, cited in Ovidia Babu-Buznea, *Dacii în conştiinţa romanticilor noştri: Schiţă la o istorie a dacismului* (Bucharest, 1979), p. 105 n. 2.

55. See also Verdery, "The Rise of the Discourse on Romanian Identity: Early 1900s to World War II," in I. Agrigoroaiei, Gh. Buzatu, and V. Cristian, eds., *Românii în istoria universală*, vol. II-1 (Iaşi, 1987).

of the nation in general as of the Romanian nation confronted with internal social contradictions, tested by the plague of fascism, and threatened by external perils."[56]

D. Gusti, the exponent of the first camp and interwar Romania's most famous sociologist, defined his agenda thus:

> [Sociology as] a positive science, that is, oriented to facts, cannot fail to consider the hierarchy of problems posed by reality itself. From the moment that the nation reveals itself to us as the most significant form of modern social life, the science of society—sociology—must constitute itself as the science of the nation. . . . The science of the nation will determine for it the ethics and politics through which the people will find its true road to self-realization. . . . This science will make it possible to establish, at last, the true national ideal, which will not mean an estrangement, a departure from the historical path of the people but a maximum development toward the fulfillment of all its natural capacities.[57]

In the name of discovering the exact character of Romanian social reality so as to determine the people's true path and then to press for appropriate social reforms, he developed a complex theoretical and methodological system and set the landscape crawling with sociological researchers.

His definition of sociology did not go unchallenged, however. His former student P. Andrei, among others, argued that the science of sociology should be more than simply a descriptive and methodologically narrow sociography, built upon innumerable village monographs and aimed at social reform.[58] Departing somewhat from Gusti's insistence that the nation was the raison d'être of sociology, he instead saw it as only one of several objects, another of which should be the study of society's spiritual life. This said, however, he regarded the Nation as the most powerful form of spiritual human community and pressed for the development of the national

56. Achim Mihu, "Problematica naţiunii române în sociologia interbelică. (Trei sociologi, trei concepţii despre naţiune)," in S. Ştefănescu, ed., *Naţiunea română* (Bucharest, 1984), p. 518.

57. Dimitrie Gusti, "Ştiinţa naţiunii," in *Opere*, vol. I (Bucharest, 1968 [1937]), pp. 493, 506.

58. Mihu, "Problematica," p. 528.

culture as a major goal of sociological work.[59] Thus, even for Andrei the discipline was to be defined in large part by its relation to the Nation, as object of both study and social action.

The national essence and its proper treatment could become the basis for claims and struggles over turf not simply within the discipline itself but also across the border between sociology and other disciplines (across *any* such borders). Against Gusti's definition of sociology, consider a statement by a partisan of psychology:

> If our sociology is relatively far advanced because, thanks to [our best researchers] we know aspects of the formation and functioning of some of our classes—the nobility, the gentry, the peasantry, and the bourgeoisie—Romanian psychology contains not one single chapter, has gathered material for not one single problem, because no one has yet posed a problem for it. And yet no one would disagree that Romanian psychology is every bit as necessary as Romanian sociology.[60]

He then makes clear that the proper object for this sorry discipline is the study of ethnic psychology, for sociology really has little to do with the ethnic essence as such: rather, its proper object is the social structure of the national society. For him, a better claim to treating the national essence adequately is offered by psychology.

Arguing from within sociology and in opposition to ethnography, another scholar noted that the rise of national consciousness brought an interest in folklore, which was expected to "enlighten our understanding of the nature and destiny of the Romanian people" but has produced nothing of scientific importance.[61] He explains this by the inadequacy of folklore as a discipline, both methodologically (it is too unsystematic) and scientifically (it lacks rigor). "Collections made at random, by persons full of zeal but lacking scientific training, deepen the national sentiment more than the knowledge of ethnic reality and therefore have more an educational and political than a scientific value."[62] Earlier studies of the Romanian people will have to be taken up again, he said, with deepened and broadened

59. Ibid.
60. Ralea, *Intre două lumi*, p. 81.
61. Traian Herseni, *Probleme de sociologie pastorală* (Bucharest, 1941), p. 5.
62. Ibid.

methods, work techniques, and conceptualization, for which sociology is vastly preferable to ethnography and folklore. Rather than being a science of *things*, as ethnography often is, sociology rests on assumptions that are functionalist, integralist, and vitalist, making it a better tool than other disciplines for researching the Romanian people: "Only in collaboration with sociology can ethnography and folklore satisfactorily fulfill their task."[63]

An especially lively dispute concerned the border that separated sociology/ethnography and philosophy; its protagonists were sociologist Henri Stahl and philosopher Lucian Blaga. Blaga offered a philosophical theory of the national essence that purported to link it with village life and folklore. In response, Stahl published several papers in the late 1930s flatly rejecting Blaga's proposals and contending that ethnographers and folklorists had offered far more plausible accounts of the elements of folk life that Blaga claimed to interpret. Stahl took particular offense at Blaga's speculating upon the Romanian village without actually studying it by any other than armchair means, and at his arrogant assumption that because the "Romanian phenomenon" has nothing to do with real historical time or sociological space, philosophy is the only way to study it. Objecting to the implicit sociology in Blaga's philosophy of culture, Stahl comments sarcastically:

> Modern sociology affirms that any fact of social life takes a certain form on account of a series of factors [the natural environment, biological, psychological, and so forth] that determine one another reciprocally. . . . Mr. Blaga, on the other hand, finds that social phenomena have only a single law: *style*, which springs from a single series of factors: the unconscious. . . . But we find criticism of Mr. Blaga's sociology not only justified but imperative, for in the present day we have embarked upon systematic research into the history and forms of Romanian popular culture. We have barely crossed the threshold of the most abject ignorance and behold! right in our path is an unforeseen obstacle, put there by the enticing formulas of the philosophy of culture. . . [which wants to make] any further study of the Romanian phenomenon superfluous. Mr. Blaga has given us the key to the problem: the stylistic matrix explains to us the style of any Romanian

63. Ibid., p. 13.

> creation. . . . The thoughtless ease. . . [with which] he brushes aside scientific research and all other domains but the philosophy of culture irritates those of us who do scientific field research, and we will fight against it.[64]

In more recent essays, even less polite in tone than those of the 1930s, Stahl objects in so many words to Blaga's claim to "monopolize knowledge of the Romanian cultural phenomenon."[65]

A final complaint, this one from ethnography rather than sociology, shows how the Nation, its defense, and a discipline might be linked with expansionary processes furthered by study of the national essence:

> It is amazing how all the disciplines that study the people—history, philology, geography, and the like—have created special institutes in all the universities; only ethnography has nothing but a university department. . . [He lists some causes of this dismal state of affairs]. Thus postwar *arrivisme* has led to the perversion of ethnicist sentiment and to ignoring the treasures that lie buried in village life. . . . [W]hen the spiritual equilibrium of intellectuals will be reestablished, when the state will consider it a capital obligation to promote ethnographic research, then. . . ethnography will be able to stand with greater success in the service of one of the loveliest missions of all: knowledge of the nation.[66]

This complaint indicates a major consequence of the debates on the national essence: their role in producing an institutional environment, a material infrastructure, that would help persons not directly in power to sustain their defense of the Nation.

Part of the self-perceived task of the intellectuals who sought to define the Romanian Nation was to defend it against the abusive practices of politicians, whose policies often departed from what at least some formulations of the national essence said they ought to do. In particular, those thinkers who identified the Romanian essence as antithetical to western bourgeois ways regarded with horror or

64. Henri H. Stahl, "Satul românesc: O discuţie de filozofie şi sociologie culturii," *Sociologia românească* 2 (1937), p. 491.

65. Henri H. Stahl, *Eseuri critice despre cultură populară românească* (Bucharest, 1983), p. 78.

66. Gh. Pavelescu, "Etnografia românească din Ardeal în ultimii douăzeci de ani (1919–1939)," *Gând românesc* 7 (1939), p. 462.

distaste the industrial development promoted by most of the interwar Romanian parties; they raised a loud defense of the Romanian people against this threat to the national mission. They were enabled to raise this defense, however, because—like the politicians who defended their own version of the Nation's interests from the ramparts of the state—they had secured in university departments and institutes a stable vantage point for their critique. The means for securing this vantage point were, in part, claims that one or another discipline's superior treatment of the Nation entitled it to more institutional resources.

The effect of all this carving up of disciplinary turf on the basis of the Nation was not only to bring into existence a more substantial material grounding for the Nation's defense, but also to embed the Nation permanently in intellectual discourse, which came to be shot through with it in every sphere of inquiry and creation. "The Nation" and "the people" had become unquestioned bases for every statement made in the debate: nowhere was anyone asking the question, "Is there such a thing as 'the Romanian people'?" Despite sometimes-fierce disagreement on the particulars, these notions had become the ground for interaction across the whole spectrum of political and cultural life. In this sense, the Nation can be said to have become a basic ideological premise of all argumentation in Romania, the language of political argument both among intellectuals and between them and others actively engaged in politics.

This essay has examined some debates about Romanian identity, illuminating the means whereby a national ideology was constructed that became and has remained hegemonic. If we inspect the terms used in arguments about Romanians' essence, we see that "cultural" notions concerning identity were simultaneously political. Asserting an eastern or western character for Romanians entailed political programs relating to capitalist industrialization; linking national character with peasants involved representations and projects for reform that contributed to the peasants' subjection by setting them squarely in another camp from those who spoke for them; and claiming greater capacity to research, represent, and defend the Nation, groups settled themselves more firmly within institutional structures. These cultural notions were also political in that debates on them

served to construct a national ideology, since shared premises about the Nation underlay the discord through which its definition was discussed.

Although the national ideology so developed was hegemonic, its relationship to the processes of state-building was ambivalent. This was partly the result of the vitality of the national discourse, a vitality rooted in its vigorous development *prior* to the formation of the Romanian state in the late 1800s. That is, the hegemonic ideology that developed through these processes did not uniformly support the policies pursued by state-makers, as they and others claiming to speak for the Nation only sometimes worked in concert with one another. During the debates, the Nation became an object of protection, every participant arguing how it might best be defined so that its needs might best be served. Some claimed to serve these interests from positions of government. But through the idea that politicians might well implement paths of development fundamentally unsuited to the national character, the groundwork was laid for others to defend the Nation against a deculturated state leadership accused of having defected from it.

Thus, the legitimacy of those holding power in Romania became subject to challenge in the name of defending the Nation. This pattern held good for most of the Communist period, despite massive changes in the class and political structure after 1945. Because the debates embedded the Nation deeply not just in intellectual and political discourse but also in institutions supporting intellectual and political life, continued action within these ideologically saturated institutions reproduced Romanian nationalism further, complicating the attempt of alternative ideologies (such as Marxism-Leninism) to secure an institutional foothold.[67] The vigorous legacy of the interwar development of this national ideology will continue to be felt in the post-Ceauşescu era.

67. This point is more fully elaborated in Verdery, *National Ideology*, ch. 4 and conclusion.

Orthodoxism: Polemics Over Ethnicity and Religion in Interwar Romania

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In the two decades between the world wars the majority of Romanian intellectuals were engaged in a grand debate about what it meant to be Romanian and how national character determined social and political development. The ideological commitments of the protagonists ranged from the extreme left to the extreme right in politics, from rationalism to mysticism in philosophy, and from capitalism to agrarianism in economics. The variety of ideas put forward was thus almost unlimited, but two loose groupings of intellectuals are nonetheless discernible. One was composed of those who were certain that Romania was destined to follow the same path of development as Western Europe, while the other sought guidance in the autochthonous past. Contemporaries often referred to the former as the "Westerners" or "Europeans" and the latter as "traditionalists."

At the heart of the polemics over national character and development (the two were never separate) was Orthodoxism. The proponents of the doctrine argued that the teachings of Eastern Orthodoxy had permeated every facet of Romanian society and had shaped its form and determined its direction from the advent of Christianity down to the nineteenth century, when the "massive intrusion" of Western influences interrupted this "natural," "organic" course of development, causing a deep crisis in the Romanian soul. The Orthodoxists, as they were known, further insisted that only a return to traditional, Orthodox spiritual values could relieve the century-long malaise which had weighed down upon Romanian society and brought it to the brink of "chaos." They turned to the village as the locus of true spirituality and to the tillers of the soil as the preservers of the ancestral ethnic traditions. Not surprisingly, they condemned all the hallmarks of modern European society—its embrace of positivism in philosophy, its reliance upon science and the scientific

method, its great urban centers, its heavy industry, its secular spirit, and its capitalist mentality—as destructive of the Romanians' Eastern heritage. Orthodoxism was thus the heir to all those currents of thought extending back into the latter half of the nineteenth century which had opposed the relentless advance of Western political and economic forms and the assimilation of Western cultural values.

I

The organized defense of "authentic" Romanian institutions went back to the 1860s, immediately after the political union of the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, when a group of young intellectuals, fresh from studies in France and Germany, turned a critical eye on their country's social and cultural development. Through the Junimea (Youth) Society which they founded in Iaşi in 1863, they promoted a new vision of the Romanian future. Drawing upon the historicist theories of German romantic philosophy and the evolutionist ideas of Herbert Spencer and others, their leading spokesman, Titu Maiorescu (1840–1917), literary critic and professor of philosophy, perceived in recent Romanian history a fateful deviation from the principles of "organic" development. He claimed that an uncritical imitation of Western European institutions had created a "paralyzing antinomy" between the form and the substance of existing Romanian institutions.[1] He and his colleagues insisted that social institutions could never be the products of abstract thought and could assume their proper form only gradually, over time. For them, society, like nature, was never "created," but was always in the process of becoming. Convinced that Romania was first and foremost an agrarian country, they could not foresee any significant shift away from the primacy of agriculture or any modification in a social structure composed of landlords and peasants. For them, the city and its preoccupations were alien to the substance of Romanian culture and sensibility,[2] and thus they sought the essence of the national character in the countryside.

1. Eugen Lovinescu, *T. Maiorescu*, Vol. I (Bucureşti: Fundaţia Regală pentru Literatură şi Artă "Regele Carol II," 1940), pp. 263–302; Z. Ornea, *Junimea şi junimismul*, 2nd rev. ed. (Bucureşti: Editura Eminescu, 1978), pp. 193–225.

2. Ornea, *Junimea*, pp. 225–249.

After the turn of the century those who decried the course of development modern Romania had taken intensified their search for "genuine" Romanian values in the village. They had no doubt that "salvation" from the "anomalies" of modern Romanian society could be had by a return to its "original" spiritual sources. Constantin Rădulescu-Motru (1868–1957), philosopher and psychologist at the University of Bucharest, belonged to the second Junimist generation, but he went further than his mentors in making the village the heart of the national tradition. From German philosophy and sociology and his own Junimist forebears he learned to appreciate the superiority of "culture" over "civilization." He discovered the locus of "organic" forms of social life, of "natural" links among members of the community in the archaic Romanian village, whereas he perceived only impersonal, "mechanical" relationships among the inhabitants of the growing urban centers. He had no doubt, therefore, that the future of the Romanian nation lay in the strengthening of its rural way of life. By the same token he denied to the Romanians any aptitude for industry or large-scale commerce, finding them inherently incapable of the disciplined planning and work which lay behind the dynamic capitalist society of Western Europe.[3] Contemporary with Rădulescu-Motru's brand of autochthonism was Sămănătorism, for a time one of the most dynamic of the burgeoning agrarian currents in Romania. Like other traditionalists, the Sămănătorists (Sowers) were convinced that their people had been diverted by liberal, Western-educated ideologues onto a false path of development wholly unsuited to their historical experience and character. They denounced capitalism and the social and political institutions it had spawned as "unnatural implantations" into a traditional society, but they shied away from specific economic and social reforms. Instead, they proposed a kind of moral purging to be accomplished by the dissemination of a culture imbued with true national values as the surest way of solving social ills and of returning the country to its proper path of development. All these ideas found passionate expression in the voluminous writings of the historian Nicolae Iorga (1871–1940). He showed unrestrained sympathy for the peasants because he thought their rural world was the place where the

3. Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, *Cultura română şi politicianismul*, 2nd ed. (Bucureşti: Librăria Socec, 1904), pp. 85–94.

laws of evolutionary social change operated in their purest form. He admired the village as the preserver of a tradition nurtured through the centuries where change occurred with "full respect" for organic structures. All this he contrasted with the character of the modern industrial city, where cold, "mechanical" relationships created a sterile environment. For him, the city was the symbol of everything that had gone wrong in modern Romania, and he was at pains to show that something in the peasant's nature made it impossible for him to adapt to the new political and economic structures that had been created in the nineteenth century. He characterized the peasant's attitude toward the city as one of incomprehension, since he could not imagine why such large masses of people had come together in such an ugly place, making themselves miserable in the pursuit of money.[4]

The institutions of the West and those relatively few Romanians, mainly middle-class entrepreneurs and intellectuals, who had adopted its ways were not the only objects of concern to traditionalists. As their thought assumed an increasingly aggressive character at the turn of the century many directed their hostility toward "foreigners" in their own midst. The term was often used in the nineteenth century to refer to Jews and made manifest the widely held view of them as outsiders who could never be assimilated into Romanian society. The origins of modern anti-Semitism in Romania may be traced back at least to the 1830s, when the steady immigration of Jews from Russia and Austria began. As their numbers and their prominence in economic life, particularly in the cities and towns, grew in the latter decades of the century, traditionalists became increasingly violent in their writings against what they referred to as the "dissolving agents" of native moral and social structures. The two most prominent theorists of anti-Semitism of the period were Alexandru C. Cuza (1857–1947), professor of political economy at the University of Iaşi, and Nicolae Paulescu (1869–1931), professor of physiology at the University of Bucharest. Unlike many earlier writers who had seen the Jewish "threat" as primarily one of economic competition, they developed racial theories by which they sought to justify the exclusion of Jews from participation in

4. Z. Ornea, *Sămănătorismul*, 2nd rev. ed. (Bucureşti: Editura Minerva, 1971), pp. 142–77.

Romanian political and civil society and, ultimately, to bring about their expulsion from the nation.[5] Their ideas were to have a strong influence in the interwar period.

II

In the years immediately after the First World War the insistence upon Romania's unique agrarian character and the search for authentic Romanian values in the countryside were overlaid by more general, European currents of thought opposed to the rationalism and scientific positivism of the latter half of the nineteenth century. The crisis of the European consciousness of the 1890s, which signalled a geological shift in patterns of thought and artistic expression and came to be known as "modernism," was shared by many Romanian intellectuals in the 1920s. If they were traditionalists, they found their own rejection of the values that had held sway for much of the nineteenth century fully confirmed. The war was partly responsible, for its cruelty and destructiveness had discredited reason and undermined the prestige of Western civilization. These intellectuals rejected the rationalism represented by Kant and his successors, who struck these intellectuals as hopelessly out of touch with the real world. Instead, they turned for guidance to Nietzsche, whose anti-rationalism fascinated them; to Dilthey and Einstein, whose relativism converted them from Darwin's determinism; to Spengler, whose theories about the inevitable decline of civilizations, especially of the West, provided them with new analytical tools; to Ludwig Klages, who exposed the opposition between the soul and the mind; to Heidegger and his praise of nothingness as the only reality; and to Freud, who revealed to them the vast creative domain of the unconscious. Thus, everything appeared to these Romanian intellectuals to be in flux, to be temporary and unstable. Their anxiety at the transitoriness of things overwhelmed them at

5. Alexandru C. Cuza, *Naţionalitatea în artă* (Bucureşti: Minerva, 1908), pp. 144–63, 180–83, 214–17; Nicolae C. Paulescu, *Fiziologie filosofică,* Vol. 1: *Instincte sociale. Patimi şi conflicte. Remedii morale* (Bucureşti: C. Sfetea, 1910), pp. 88–131, and Vol. 2: *Spitalul, Coranul, Talmudul, Cahalul, Franc-Masoneria* (Bucureşti: C. Sfetea, 1913), pp. 44–60 and *passim.*

times, and their search for new spiritual values became an obsession.

Many intellectuals eagerly embraced all things Eastern. A veritable wave of irrationalist and mystical ideas seemed to break across Romanian cultural life. These ideas came from Asia, especially India, but from Europe, too. Alongside Buddhism and Yoga, Christian and mystical philosophy, as expounded by the Fathers of the Church, Kierkegaard, and Berdyaev, exercised a profound influence on Romanian thought. For still other intellectuals, a fascination with the philosophy of the East reinforced their admiration for the Romanian village. They discovered striking analogies between the religious sensibilities and mental structures of these two seemingly diverse worlds. Their immersion in both cultures was like a return to the Rousseauistic vision of the healthy man of nature, uncorrupted by the vices of a cosmopolitan, rationalist civilization. At home they discovered in Eastern Orthodoxy the eternal source of this simple, unspoiled way of life, and through an original fusion of Eastern Christian spirituality and the Romanian rural world they laid the foundations of Orthodoxism.

III

Orthodoxism may be seen as an extension of Romanian traditionalism into the interwar period. It thus stood for "authentic" Romanian values and an "organic" development of society rooted in the archaic, unspoiled village, and it rejected the civilization of the West as inimical to the native spirit. In the writings of some of its principal advocates Orthodoxism also bordered on the xenophobic and was openly anti-Semitic. It thus carried forward and, to some extent, fused the tenets of Junimism, Sămănătorism, and the extreme nationalism espoused by Alexandru Cuza. But it also made an original contribution to Romanian traditionalism by placing Orthodox spirituality at the moral center of the new Romania. Two distinct phases in the evolution of Orthodoxism need to be distinguished. The first, in the 1920s, was primarily spiritual and cultural as its leading theorists concerned themselves with the Romanian tradition and national character. The second phase coincided with the world economic depression and the inexorable swing to the right in

politics in the 1930s. Many Orthodoxists now became openly chauvinistic and racist and were absorbed in politics, especially on the extreme right.

The leading theorist of Orthodoxism was Nichifor Crainic (1889–1972).[6] As a seminary student and then at the faculty of literature and philosophy at the University of Bucharest before the First World War he had sought to give Romanian intellectual life a religious direction based upon a revival of Orthodox spirituality. After theological studies in Vienna, where he wrote a doctoral dissertation on the medieval German mystic, Meister Eckhart, he returned home convinced that the Orthodox faith was the only foundation upon which post-war Greater Romania could be built. He acknowledged his debt to numerous precursors, among whom he included Iorga and Cuza, but he complained that they had failed to accord religion the key place it deserved in their defense of specific Romanian values. He could cite only one person who had understood the "true heart" of Romanian autochthonism—Nicolae Paulescu—whom he praised for having demonstrated through the study of physiology how Christianity had imbued respect for tradition and love of nation with a consciousness of moral perfection.[7] Like many of his generation, Crainic felt a desperate need to provide the Romanian nation with a new ideal in order to fill what he perceived as a spiritual void in the postwar world. For him, that ideal could only be religious, since, as a practicing Christian, he was certain that spiritual rather than economic or political forces shaped the development of a people. Sensing that Romanian society lacked an "inner harmony" and was in the throes of a "general disaggregation" caused by the "cruel" pursuit of material goods, he made a strengthened religious consciousness the "cardinal point" in a reorientation of Romanian society.[8]

Crainic elaborated the tenets of Orthodoxism in a series of articles which he published in the monthly *Gîndirea* (Thought), one of the

6. There is no monograph on Crainic. See: Academia de Ştiinţe Sociale şi Politice a Republicii Socialiste România, *Istoria filozofiei româneşti*, Vol. 2 (Bucureşti: Editura Academiei R.S. România, 1980), pp. 677–701, 712–41.

7. Nichifor Crainic, "Nicolae Paulescu: fundatorul naţionalismului creştin." In Nichifor Crainic, *Ortodoxie şi etnocraţie* (Bucureşti: Cugetaria, 1940), pp. 151–52, 156.

8. Nichifor Crainic, "Politică şi ortodoxie." *Gîndirea*, 3:5 (1923), pp. 80–81.

most influential literary and cultural reviews of interwar Romania, which he edited from 1926 to 1944. *Gîndirea* was the organ of a circle of poets, novelists, and philosophers who shared a keen interest in speculative thought and mystical and religious experiences and sought inspiration for their own work in the autochthonous, archaic customs and mentality of the Romanian village. The *Gîndirea* circle thus offered Crainic a congenial atmosphere in which to pursue his religious preoccupations, but the circle encompassed many intellectuals who differed significantly from him in their approach to creativity and their appreciation of the role of religion in the life of the nation. The Orthodoxism which he preached was thus by no means synonymous with Gîndirism.

On the fundamental question of whether the Romanians belonged to the West or East, Crainic showed no hesitation, in the 1920s, in placing them in the East. He insisted that the sources of Romanian spirituality and, hence, the elements which defined the Romanian character, had originated in Byzantium. Thus, for him, the East meant Orthodoxy, which, he argued, had achieved its apogee in the Byzantine middle ages, an era he defined as the "brilliant synthesis" of antiquity and the Christian golden age preceding the Renaissance.[9]

Crainic's warm embrace of the East was balanced by a total rejection of the West as a formative element of Romanian spirituality. He found every aspect of modern Western society and thought incompatible with the national character. Proclaiming the differences between the Orthodox East and the Roman Catholic and Protestant West "insurmountable" and "eternal," like traditionalists before him, he blamed the liberals of 1848 and their Westernizing successors for having forced Western ideas and institutions upon a society structurally incapable of assimilating them. In so doing, his argument ran, they had drastically changed the "natural course" of Romanian development by replacing with superficial imports those institutions which had grown out of the accumulated experience of the nation.[10] The results, he lamented, were everywhere to be seen in the "chaos" of contemporary Romanian society.

9. Nichifor Crainic, "Mistificarea 'Românismului' " and "Spiritualitate şi Românism." In Nichifor Crainic, *Ortodoxie şi etnocraţie*, pp. 112–29 and 130–45, respectively.

10. Nichifor Crainic, "Parsifal," *Gîndirea*, 3:8–10 (1924), pp. 182–83; Crainic, "Politică şi ortodoxie," p. 79.

Crainic found a theoretical justification for his hostility to the West in the antinomy "civilization" and "culture." Borrowing freely from Spengler, he accepted the thesis that the West (civilization), because of its embrace of scientism and materialism, had entered the period of old age and decline. He identified the distinctive sign of its crisis as the "world city," Berlin or New York, "centers of death," an environment of "unrelieved materialism" and "colorless internationalism" which deprived man of his creative sense, leaving him sterile, "without metaphysics."[11] Crainic accused the Romanian liberals of 1848 of having, in effect, introduced the spirit of the city into the world of the patriarchal Romanian village: they had imposed a polished civilization dominated by scientific positivism upon a culture of "primitive youth," delicate and almost childlike in its feelings, whose means of expression was religion. Thus, he saw the Westernization of Romania coinciding with the onset of the decline of the West, of a civilization in crisis, and attributed to this process the essential cause of the crisis in Romanian society. The only way out for the Romanians, he warned, was a return to the "native genius" and the "autochthonous spirit," in other words, a revitalization of spiritual life based upon the Eastern tradition.

The native genius, for Crainic, was synonymous with Orthodoxy. But he understood the latter term in a particular way. It did not refer to the official Romanian Church, with which he was permanently at odds, but rather signified a fusion of the ethnic tradition and Eastern Christian spirituality. According to Crainic's often fanciful interpretation of Romanian history, the two elements evolved together, enriching one another. He went so far as to claim that the Romanians had been born Orthodox Christian, since they had never undergone a formal, mass conversion as had the Slavs, Magyars, and Germans. Rather, he insisted, a fusion had occurred between Orthodoxy and the Romanian soul, and thus the Romanians had made their appearance in history purely and simply as an Orthodox people. Among the proofs he advanced was the inability of both Roman Catholics and Protestants to gain converts among the Romanians, a failure he attributed to the fact that Orthodoxy had not been imposed upon the Romanians, but was, rather, an inherent expression of their religious

11. Crainic, "Parsifal," pp. 181–82.

consciousness.[12] He had praise for the Sămănătorists for having emphasized the vitality of the nation and the "spirit of the earth," but he pointed out that they had erred egregiously in treating the peasant as merely a creature of instinct. By placing man in the center of the rural world, they had presented him as simply an "eruption of natural, elemental forces" and had completely ignored his religious consciousness. They had thus had a splendid vision of the Romanian earth, but had left out the sky of Romanian spirituality.[13]

Crainic was at pains throughout the 1920s to prove the inseparability of ethnicity and Orthodoxy. He defined ethnicity not in terms of geography or anthropological data but by expanding upon the myth of blood, speech, and earth, which constituted the tradition he had sworn to defend. Blood represented the ageless youth of the Romanian folk ballad; speech was the means of transmitting ideas, as blood transmitted life; and earth was the support for the perpetual flux of things, the base over which the "sea of blood and speech" (the Romanian people) moved back and forth. Then, there was Orthodoxy, which Crainic defined as the eternal tradition of the spirit which pervaded earthly experience and gave it meaning.[14] He used the Romanian Christmas carol (the *colindă*) to show how the two traditions had fused, for in it he discovered a specifically Romanian representation of Jesus, a Jesus not engaged in subtle doctrinal debate with the Pharisees, but moving among the common people, simple and good, like nature.[15]

The ideal Romanian, the bearer of the nation's distinctive character, who emerged from Crainic's elaboration of Orthodoxism belonged to the village, not to the city. He was a peasant who worked the land and stood in an intimate, "organic" relationship with the land, and who interacted naturally and spontaneously with his fellow man. Above all, he was Orthodox, a quality, Crainic insisted, which was ingrained in the peasant's very nature. Here, in this noble rustic, contemplative and lacking the work ethic of capitalism, Crainic found the antithesis to the "bourgeois spirit" of the West, with its unrelenting rational and fanatical pursuit of worldly goods.

12. Crainic, "Spiritualitate şi Romånism," p. 135.
13. Nichifor Crainic, "Sensul tradiţiei." *Gîndirea*, 9:1–2 (1929), pp . 6–7, 9–10.
14. Ibid., pp. 3–7.
15. Nichifor Crainic, "Isus în ţara mea." *Gîndirea*, 2:11–12 (1923), pp. 117–18.

Of Crainic's colleagues on *Gîndirea*, none wrote with more authority on the theological aspects of Orthodoxism than Dumitru Stăniloae (b. 1903), a professor at the Orthodox Theological Academy in Sibiu in the 1930s. Like Crainic, he proclaimed the complete fusion of the ethnic and Eastern Orthodoxy in the Romanian soul. The Romanians, he thought, were, of all the Orthodox peoples, the one most deeply imbued with the Orthodox spirit: not only had they been born Christian, but they had for centuries lived in isolation from other spiritual currents, which could have disturbed their Orthodox religious structure.[16] For him, Orthodoxy and the Romanian spirit were inseparable, since the former had incorporated the transcendent values of Orthodoxy into the most intimate aspects of everyday life. As examples, he cited the use of ordinary bread made by the people for the communion, the use of the vernacular in the liturgy, and the marriage of priests, which allowed them to sink deep roots in the community.[17] In order to explain how Romanian Orthodoxy differed from that of the Slavs, Stăniloae recognized "Latinity" as a significant component of Romanian ethnicity, but he insisted that Orthodoxy was the only element that sustained the Romanians' ethnic uniqueness.[18]

Stăniloae, like other Orthodoxists, regarded the West as fundamentally different from the East. Citing Berdyaev, he insisted that the dominant force in Western spiritual life since the Renaissance had been the relentless secularization of man, which had resulted in the emergence of a utilitarian and hedonistic civilization. The West, he was convinced, had exhausted its moral strength and was sliding inexorably into the abyss. He warned his fellow Romanians against following the same dangerous path, along which the West had tried to lead them since the middle of the nineteenth century. He urged them, instead, to perfect their "original powers" as indicated by the "Orthodoxy of our soul."[19]

For Stăniloae, spiritual elements ultimately determined the character of a people. Like Crainic, he sought the constituent elements

16. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Ortodoxie şi românism* (Sibiu: Tiparul Tipografiei Arhidiecezane, 1939), p. 87.

17. Dumitru Stăniloae, "Ortodoxia, modul spiritualităţii româneşti," *Gîndirea*, 19:6 (1940), pp. 420–21.

18. Stăniloae, *Ortodoxie şi românism*, pp. 133, 141.

19. Stăniloae, "Ortodoxia," pp. 424–25.

of Romanian spirituality in the village, in the religious beliefs, the moral conceptions, and the cultural products of its inhabitants. All these facets of the Romanians' original creativity, he argued, were permeated by Orthodoxy. Among the qualities which defined the Romanian soul he emphasized the sense of a mystical union between man and nature. He was struck particularly by the empathy the Romanian felt with organic nature—animals and plants—all those things created by God, as manifested in the anonymous masterpiece of folk poetry, *Miorita.*[20] By contrast, Stăniloae insisted, Western Europeans treated nature only as material to be exploited because both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism taught that man was everything and other living things were nothing. But the Romanian, in Stăniloae's view, thought of nature as a distinct being and treated it gently and with respect, thus displaying the sentiment of "cosmic brotherhood" with which Orthodoxy had endowed him.[21] For Stăniloae, then, the peasant, living in harmony with his environment and touched by the eternal spirit of Eastern Orthodoxy, embodied all those moral and spiritual qualities that signified Romanian. There was no room here for the city. The true Romanian, he declared, felt no intimacy with the things created by man and, hence, he could not accommodate himself to the factory and the machine.

IV

Outside Crainic's immediate circle Orthodoxism received a polite, even sympathetic hearing from those intellectuals who shared his hostility to positivism, science, capitalism, and cities. But they were not uncritical and, as time passed, they found Crainic's dogmatism a hindrance to their own understanding of the crucial moral and spiritual issues of the day. As gifted writers and thinkers, they were determined to pursue their own creative vocations free of ideological constraints. Crainic's closest ally was undoubtedly Nae Ionescu (1888–1940),[22] a professor of philosophy at the University of Bucha-

20. Stăniloae, *Ortodoxie și românism*, pp. 72–73.
21. Ibid., p. 77.
22. There is no monograph on Ionescu. For an appreciation of his influence on the younger generation of Romanian intellectuals see the afterword by Mircea Eliade in the selection of

rest and the chief theorist of *trăirism*, the Romanian variant of existentialism. He was one of the leaders of the anti-rationalist current in Romanian thought in the interwar period and exerted a decisive influence on the generation of intellectuals who began their careers in the later 1920s. He proclaimed the bankruptcy of positivism and insisted that the world was guided by forces intractable to man's cognitive faculties, that nature concealed within itself "latent virtues" whose operations were unpredictable, and that all life was a spontaneous gushing forth of the human spirit which reason was powerless to contain. For him, true reality lay in action, and his belief in the primacy of exuberant life over the intellect led him to religious faith. Only the existence of God and His intervention in phenomena, he taught, relieved the world of its character as an "absurd anarchy."[23] It was religion, or a "mystical attitude," then, that allowed man a "realist" comprehension of the world.[24]

Ionescu found a refuge from the absurdities of the modern world in the Romanian village, for it was here that the soul prevailed over the mind and the Romanian peasant stood in direct communion with the nature of things. Orthodoxy, he thought, had been primarily responsible for shaping the attitude of the Romanian peasant toward life and thus for creating a specifically Romanian view of the world. He traced the intimate relationship between Orthodoxy and the rural world back to the coming of Christianity to ancient Dacia in the first century, and he judged the influence of Eastern Christianity to have been so overwhelming that it became a part of the Romanians' very being, or, as he put it, "We are Orthodox because we are Romanian, and we are Romanian because we are Orthodox."[25] He thought that one could *become* a Catholic or a Protestant, but he had no doubt that if one were Romanian he had been born Orthodox. He called

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Ionescu's newspaper articles which Eliade edited: *Nae Ionescu, Roza vînturilor, 1926–1933* (Bucureşti: Cultura Naţională, 1937), pp. 421–44. See also Nae Ionescu, *Istoria logicei*, 2nd ed. (Bucureşti: Comitetul pentru Tipărirea Operei lui Nae Ionescu, 1943), pp. v-xxxiv; and Mac Linscott Ricketts, *Mircea Eliade. The Romanian Roots, 1907–1945*, Vol. 1 (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1988), pp. 91–126.

23. Ionescu, *Roza vînturilor*, pp. 26–27.

24. Nae Ionescu, *Metafizică*, Vol. 1 (Bucureşti: Comitetul pentru Tipărirea Operei lui Nae Ionescu, 1942), pp. 148–61.

25. Ionescu, *Roza vînturilor*, p. 205.

Orthodoxy a natural mode of being in the world, which one could not acquire.[26]

This blending of ethnicity and Eastern spirituality led Ionescu to conclude that fundamental, unbridgeable structural differences separated the Romanians from Western society. He found in Roman Catholic and Protestant Europe the antithesis of Romanian peasant society. The West was individualist in social relations, rationalist in intellectual preoccupations, and bourgeois-capitalist in economic structures.[27] He stridently denounced the institutions of bourgeois Europe as artificial creations based upon purely "juridical" relationships between groups and individuals. The institutions of the Romanian village, on the other hand, he pronounced "organic" structures, which had preserved the Romanian's easy integration into nature and his community and had enhanced his receptivity to the mystery of existence. Such qualities, Ionescu insisted, explained why Romania could never become industrial: the Romanian lacked the spirit of calculation and the discipline of work which were the foundations of modern bourgeois-capitalist society.

For Ionescu, then, the true Romanian belonged to the village, which was the center of Orthodox spirituality, and shunned the city with all its corruption of natural, spontaneous existence. He discerned a perfect fusion between the peasant and Orthodoxy,[28] and he made Orthodox spirituality the foundation of the "harmonious [Romanian] community of thought and deed."[29]

In the later 1920s a number of intellectuals, who styled themselves "the young generation" and were deeply influenced by Nae Ionescu, sought to escape the "frightening emptiness" of positivism and modern technology and to achieve a new "spiritual equilibrium." Nichifor Crainic discerned in their restlessness a confirmation of a "new orientation" in Romanian intellectual life and a "return to religion," and he opened the pages of *Gîndirea* to them.[30] But this generation had its own agenda. Intent upon discovering the true coordinates of

26. Mircea Eliade, *Autobiography*, Vol. 1, (1907–1937): *Journey East, Journey West* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981), p. 133.

27. Ionescu, *Roza vînturilor*, p. 261; Niculae [Nae] Ionescu, "Individualismul englez," *Gîndirea* 4:2 (1924), pp. 36–37.

28. Ionescu, *Roza vînturilor*, p. 35.

29. Nae Ionescu, "Nationalism şi ortodoxie," *Predania* 8–9 (1937), p. 3.

30. Nichifor Crainic, "Spiritualitate," *Gîndirea* 8:8–9 (1928), pp. 307, 310.

Romanian spirituality and eager to set Romanian culture on a new course, they did not join the *Gîndirea* circle, but, instead, formed a loose association called Criterion. Its members included Mircea Eliade (1907–1986), who was to become a renowned historian of religion; Emil Cioran (b. 1911), later the philosopher of man's tragic destiny; and Mircea Vulcănescu (1904–1952), philosopher and sociologist.[31]

The Criterionists enthusiastically embraced Ionescu's exhortations to experience life rather than reduce it to abstract formulas. Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran, and others harbored no doubts that they were thus the missionaries of a new spirituality and the founders of new laws and customs. They read Swedenborg, Kierkegaard, Shestov, Heidegger, Unamuno, and Berdyaev; they were interested in orphism, theosophy, Eastern mysticism, and archaic religions; they spoke about the providential mission of their generation; and they decried the mediocrity of bourgeois existence and denounced materialism in all its forms. Their mission, as Mircea Vulcănescu defined it, was to "assure the unity of the Romanian soul," that is, to bring about the spiritual reconstruction of Romania, just as the preceding generation had accomplished the task of political unity.[32]

Like Crainic and Ionescu, the Criterionists were drawn to the village as the locus of Romanian spirituality, and they spoke approvingly of the role Orthodoxy had had in shaping the national experience. But they were not Orthodoxists. In their revulsion at the positivism and materialism bequeathed by the nineteenth century they turned to mysticism, but not to Orthodox doctrine. It seemed to them axiomatic that mystical exaltation rather than faith was the foundation of human sensibility. Mircea Eliade's experience was characteristic. In a small book of essays about the spiritual quest of his generation published in 1927 and entitled, *Itinerariu spiritual* (Spiritual Itinerary), he thought at first that Orthodoxy could provide the young generation with an all-encompassing conception of existence and could become "a new phenomenon in the history of modern Romanian culture." [33] But he admitted that his understanding

31. The fullest account of its goals and activities is Liviu Antonesei, "Le moment Criterion—un modèle d'action culturelle." In Alexandru Zub, ed., *Culture and Society* (Iaşi: Editura Academiei R. S. România, 1985), pp. 189–206

32. Mircea Vulcănescu, "Generaţie," *Criterion* 1:3–4 (1934), p. 6.

33. Eliade, *Autobiography*, Vol. 1, p. 132.

of Orthodoxy was superficial, and later, as his intellectual horizons and experience of life broadened, particularly during a stay in India where he became fascinated by Hinduism, Orthodoxy henceforth occupied only a modest place in his sweeping comparative studies of religion. Emil Cioran strayed even farther afield. He became preoccupied with the tragedy of individual existence and put his hope in Protestant mysticism of the Kierkegaard variety. When he wrote about the spiritual crisis of interwar Romania he indeed paid homage to Orthodoxy for having shielded the Romanian character through the centuries from assimilation by more dynamic societies, but he saw ultimate salvation only in Romania's integration into urban, cosmopolitan Europe.[34] Mircea Vulcănescu also recognized the formative influence of Orthodoxy on Romanian spiritual life, but, unlike Eliade and Cioran, he sought the salvation of his and future generations in the village. It was only here, he thought, that an organic style of Romanian life had survived and that the Romanian soul would have to meet the challenge to it posed by the "massive invasion" of the West.[35]

Lucian Blaga (1895–1961),[36] widely regarded as the outstanding Romanian poet and the most original Romanian philosopher of the twentieth century, approached the problem of national character from the same general cultural perspective as his colleagues at *Gîndirea* and the Criterionists. He had no doubt that Europe was in the throes of a crisis of reason, and he praised the irrational, the illogical, and the unconscious as avenues for exploring the hidden essences of existence.[37] He also sensed a pervasive spiritual anxiety. Repelled by the sprawling, cosmopolitan city, which, for him, symbolized modern mechanized society, he looked to the rural world as

34. Emil Cioran, *Schimbarea la faţă a României* (Bucureşti: Editura Vremea, 1936), pp. 75–77, 106–09.

35. Mircea Vulcănescu, *Tendinţele tinerei generaţii* (Biblioteca Revistei Lunare "Lumea Nouă," No. 14) (Bucureşti: Tipografia ziarului "Universul," 1934), pp. 15–16.

36. The critical literature on Blaga is extensive and growing. Among recent works devoted to his philosophy are: Ion Mihail Popescu, *O perspectivă românească asupra teoriei culturii şi valorilor* (Bucureşti: Editura Eminescu, 1980) and the collection of essays edited by Dumitru Ghişe, Angela Botez, and Victor Botez, *Lucian Blaga—cunoaştere şi creaţie* (Bucureşti: Cartea Românească, 1987).

37. Lucian Blaga, *Censura transcendentă* (published originally as a separate work in 1934), in Lucian Blaga, *Trilogia cunoaşterii* (Bucureşti: Fundaţia Regală pentru Literatură şi Artă, 1943), pp. 391–95.

a final refuge for the oppressed human spirit. He discovered in the Romanian village the attributes of an eminently humane existence, and he devoted much of his finest work in philosophy and poetry to an inquiry into the essence of its character.

Blaga warmly acknowledged the contributions which Orthodoxy had made to the formation of Romanian cultural and spiritual life and accorded it an "organic" place in the ethnic psyche. But he had no interest in Orthodox religious doctrine. He used the term Orthodoxy in an ethnic-geographical sense to delimit Southeastern Europe from Roman Catholic and Protestant Europe. For him, these three areas were distinguished from one another less by dogma than by the "infiltrations" into universal Christian doctrine of local customs and beliefs as it spread to various countries. These infiltrations endowed Roman Catholicism with the categories of "authority" (a "will to power," "a subtle juridical spirit"), Protestantism with those of "liberty" ("independence of judgment," "duty"), and Orthodoxy with those of the "organic" ("life," "the earth," "nature").[38]

Despite the importance which Blaga accorded Orthodoxy in nurturing the Romanian character through the ages, he rejected the notion that it was primarily responsible for the originality of the Romanian spirit. In any case, Orthodoxy, for him, was not a religious but a cultural phenomenon. He drew the ire of the Orthodoxists Crainic and Stăniloae by insisting that Orthodox dogma had little to do with molding the Romanian soul, an accomplishment he attributed, instead, to the "derogations" of Orthodox dogma by the "spirit of heresy" inherent in the semi-pagan folklore of the Romanian village and preserved in such folk creations as the Romanian Christmas carol.[39] He confessed that he had been attracted to Orthodoxy not by its teachings but by the enormous wealth of ancient mythological and pagan elements which had survived in it,[40] and had made it more tolerant of speculative thought than either Roman Catholicism or Protestantism. But he denied to Orthodox doctrine a significant role

38. Lucian Blaga, *Spaţiul mioritic* (published originally as a separate work in 1936), in Lucian Blaga, *Trilogia culturii* (Bucureşti: Fundaţia Regală pentru Literatură şi Artă, 1944), pp. 184–205.

39. Ibid., pp. 181–82, 241–49.

40. Lucian Blaga, *Hronicul şi cîntecul vîrstelor* (Bucureşti: Editura Tineretului, 1965), p. 167.

in forming national identity. Rather, he thought it had had a levelling effect on the peoples of Southeastern Europe. Thus, he sought the elements of style which differentiated Romanians from Serbian and Bulgarian Orthodox in their ancient, pre-Christian beliefs and practices, especially their way of experiencing existence, which he traced back to pagan Thracian times.

Blaga was convinced that Romanian spirituality, which mainly determined national character, had been preserved in its purest form in the village. It was the center of an organic, eminently human mode of existence, which, borrowing from Spengler, he called "culture."[41] It stood in stark contrast to the city, the embodiment of "civilization," a mechanical, bourgeois world facing imminent extinction, which Blaga characterized as the locale of the rationalist, scientific spirit and of such "non-creative" occupations as the accumulation of positive knowledge. Here man lost his "cosmic sentiment," and his natural, organic relationship with his fellow man slowly disintegrated. He contrasted the city, which dissolved the "concrete phenomena" of existence and isolated man from nature,[42] with the village, the zone of myth and magic thought where the Romanian character had remained whole and man was brought fully into a creative relationship with existence.

V

Orthodoxism touched Romanian intellectual and social life in varied ways, but its precise influence is difficult to measure. Nonetheless, one thing is certain. Nichifor Crainic and his supporters brought religion to the forefront of the debate over national character. Not only in *Gîndirea,* but even in reviews hostile to Orthodoxism the connection between religion and ethnicity was a constant preoccupation in the late 1920s and early 1930s. For example, *Tiparnița literară* (The Literary Printing Works), a modernist monthly pub-

41. Lucian Blaga, "Elogiul satului românesc," in Academia Română, *Discursuri de recepție,* No. 71 (București: Monitorul Oficial și Imprimeriile Statului, 1937), pp. 3–5, 12–16; Blaga, *Hronicul,* pp. 24–28.

42. Lucian Blaga, *Geneza metaforei și sensul culturii* (published originally as a separate work in 1937), in Blaga, *Trilogia culturii,* pp. 345–47.

lished in Bucharest between 1928 and 1931, conducted a survey in November 1928 on the question of the existence and the attributes of the "new spirituality" as propounded by *Gîndirea* and the young generation,[43] and *Kalende* (Bucharest, 1928–1929), a monthly whose editors urged "lucidity" rather than "mysticism" in dealing with the problems confronting modern Romania, conducted its own inquiry in 1928 about the inclusion of Orthodoxy as a "necessary and permanent component of the Romanian organism."[44] The majority of the respondents belittled the contribution of Orthodoxy to the formation of the Romanian national character and culture.

A number of the most prominent figures in Romanian interwar intellectual life joined in the assault on Crainic and his Orthodoxist colleagues from a liberal, rationalist standpoint. Eugen Lovinescu (1881–1943), the foremost literary critic of the period who had elaborated the theory of synchronism to explain the inevitable assimilation of Romanians with Western culture, dismissed Orthodoxy as an "obscurantist" religion which had imposed a foreign liturgical language (Slavic) on the Romanians and had cast them into the great mass of Slavs, who had nearly engulfed them. For him, the Romanians had begun to become themselves only when they entered into contact with the West in the nineteenth century and thus freed the "national spirit" from the "slavery" of Eastern cultural forms.[45] The sociologist Mihai Ralea (1896–1964), the editor of the influential literary and public affairs monthly, *Viaţa românească* (Romanian Life), one of the leading voices of Europeanism between the wars, also denounced Orthodoxy as obscurantist and an impediment to the affirmation of the national character, because of its essentially Byzantine-Slavic character.[46] The literary critic Pompiliu Constantinescu (1901–1946) was typical of a number of Europeans who denied altogether the religiosity of the Romanians and thus could

43. A few of the responses were published in I. Hangiu, ed., *Presa literară românească*, Vol. 2 (Bucureşti: Editura pentru Literatură, 1968), pp. 486–90.

44. Mioara Apolzan, *Aspecte de istorie literară* (Bucureşti: Editura Minerva, 1983), pp. 66–67.

45. Eugen Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizaţiei române moderne*, Vol. 1 (Bucureşti: Editura Ancora, 1924), pp. 9, 12–16, 19–23.

46. Mihai Ralea, "Rasputinism," *Viaţa românească* 20:12 (1928), pp. 337, 339–40 and "Iarăşi ortodoxism," Ibid. 21: 7–8 (1929), p. 188–89.

discern no significant influence of Orthodoxy on the formation of the national character.[47]

Although Crainic gained few converts, Orthodoxism as a broadly spiritual movement maintained its appeal among numerous members of the young generation. The thought of the Criterionist Mircea Vulcănescu provides a striking example of their state of mind. He characterized his generation as the one that "did not make war." They had been taught in school to uphold certain values—to revere human life as the supreme good and to defend individual liberty as the perfect means of accomplishing good—but during the war and afterwards they saw these sacred principles disavowed by the very persons who had taught them. Henceforth, young intellectuals could no longer believe in the individual as being sufficient unto himself or in the efficacy of liberty. In postwar Romania they were, instead, burdened by a tragic sense of their destiny because on all sides they witnessed only disdain for everything that was culture or an aspiration to some higher ideal or pure spirituality, and they came to realize that everything that was not for sale had no value. They felt themselves to be an "uprooted" generation, one that was somehow incomplete and lacking in "roundness and measure." Neither class dictatorship nor integral nationalism could satisfy them; nor could relativism or some absolutist doctrine give them the answers they sought to the gravest problems of existence.[48] They tried to "anchor" themselves in the rural world, where people understood that everything beyond God which they had preserved as Romanians was merely transitory.[49]

An assessment of the role of Orthodoxism in Romanian intellectual life is complicated by Crainic's shift of emphasis from the religious and the cultural to the political in the 1930s. He now openly expressed his admiration for fascism, especially for the form it had taken in Mussolini's Italy, and he made "autochthonism," defined as a blend of ethnicity and religion, the spiritual glue of his own version

47. Pompiliu Constantinescu, "Misticism şi ortodoxism literar" and "Creştinismul folkloric," in Pompiliu Constantinescu, *Scrieri*, Vol. 6 (Bucureşti: Editura Minerva, 1972), pp. 429–436 and 448–454, respectively. Both articles were originally published in 1927.

48. Vulcănescu, *Tendințele tinerei generații*, pp. 8–9.

49. Ibid., p. 20.

of the corporate state, which he called an "ethnocracy." Although he labelled his ideal "a Christian society organized in a state,"[50] it was evident that ethnic nationalism was the guiding force and that the main purpose of ethnocratic corporatism was to ensure the dominance of the "autochthonous element," that is, the Romanians.[51] But he insisted that the true mission of his new state was spiritual—to reestablish a sense of solidarity among all Romanians based upon the values preserved in the village.

Crainic's emphasis upon ethnicity and his admiration for fascism caused him to turn away from the venerated East toward secular Rome. In Mussolini's Italy he found the working model of a state based upon Christian spirituality which harmoniously combined historical tradition with modern political and economic experience without the "exaggerations" of Western bourgeois liberalism or Marxism.[52] He turned to Rome also because he had rediscovered the Romanians' Latin origins. Whereas once he had located the principal lines of Romanian historical development in Byzantium, he now spoke approvingly of "mother Rome," and seemed to suggest that the spirit of the new, fascist Rome would determine the "form of history" which ethnocratic Romania would assume.[53] It was this new brand of Orthodoxism that appealed to certain elements of the young generation, those who, as Mircea Vulcănescu noted, "became activists through desperation," in contrast to the mainstream, who sought inner harmony in a bucolic setting. He characterized the activists as those who "threw themselves" at a fanatical credo without knowing to what purpose and who submitted blindly to the leader and adopted a military discipline unthinkingly. They did these things, he claimed, not because they believed in them, but because they wanted to believe.[54] Here was a succinct portrait of leaders of the Iron Guard, the Romanian fascist organization founded in 1927. Before 1938, when the violent purge of the Guard by King Carol II began, it was manifestly an organization of the young generation, whose leaders

50. Nichifor Crainic, "Copilărie şi sfinţenie." In Crainic, *Ortodoxie şi etnocraţie*, p. 10.

51. Nichifor Crainic, "Spiritul autohton." In Crainic, *Ortodoxie şi etnocraţie*, p. 193.

52. Nichifor Crainic, "Roma universală." In Nichifor Crainic, *Puncte cardinale în haos* (Bucureşti: Cugetarea, 1936), p. 287.

53. Ibid., pp. 297–298.

54. Vulcănescu, *Tendinţele tinerei generaţii*, pp. 11–12.

were university-educated and mainly urban.[55] They were nationalist, anti-Semitic, hostile to Western liberal democracy and capitalism, religious, even mystical, and idealistic. They were thus individuals who could find intellectual sustenance and a justification for their extremist activities in Orthodoxism. Crainic's teachings (and those of other traditionalists) appealed to them because they, too, felt alienated by a political and social system which seemed to have been created without reference to and even at the expense of "Romanian realities." Yet, the influence of Orthodoxism, even Crainic's ethnocracy, was limited, for the Iron Guard was a mass organization fully engaged in the struggle for political power. Orthodoxism, though it nourished such movements, never became more than a philosophy of culture and a theory of social development.

55. Armin Heinen, *Die Legion "Erzengel Michael" in Rumänien. Soziale Bewegung und politische Organisation* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1986), pp. 384–391.

The "National Essence" in Interwar Romanian Literary Life

MARIAN PAPAHAGI

The years between the two world wars were ones of tremendous ferment in Romanian literature, with a focus on the idea of the "national essence."[1] Writers and critics were preoccupied with defining Romania's uniqueness and how it might best be nourished in these new conditions. Discussions varied widely and, although the principal tendency was for these complex and diverse arguments to become politically associated with a radical right and a liberal left, this simplification did not completely eliminate the complexities of the arguments made or of the positions taken.

The debates used terms inherited from the nineteenth century that shaped the terrain upon which interwar writers argued.[2]

Historical Antecedents to the Interwar Literary Arguments

Nineteenth-century Romanian culture had inherited a great idea from the Moldavian chroniclers Grigore Ureche, Miron Costin, and Ion Neculce, developed further by Constantin Cantacuzino and Dimitrie Cantemir as well as by such representatives of the so-called Transylvanian School as Samuil Micu, Petru Maior, and Gheorghe Şincai.[3] This was the Latin idea: the belief that the history and character of the Romanians had been most deeply influenced by their

1. The author uses the Romanian expression "national specificity," a direct translation of the Romanian *specificul național*. For consistency with other papers, this has been changed by the editor to "national essence."

2. For these problems see the current literary histories and P. P. Panaitescu, *Contribuții la istoria culturii româneşti* (Bucureşti, 1971); Dan Berindei, *Cultura națională modernă* (Bucureşti, 1986); Al. Ciorănescu, *La culture roumaine et l'Europe* (Bucureşti, 1942); B. Munteanu, *La littérature roumaine et l'Europe* (Bucureşti, 1942).

3. The dates assigned these early historians are 1590?–1647, 1633?–1691, and 1672?–1745, respectively, for Ureche, Costin, and Neculce; 1640?–1714, for Cantacuzino; 1673–1723, for Cantemir; and 1745–1806, 1756–1821, and 1754–1816, respectively, for Micu, Maior, and Şincai.

Roman forebears. The idea informed and unified questions of the linguistic, historical, ethnic, cultural, and political specificity of a people that the vicissitudes of history had divided across three large provinces, separated politically for several centuries.

Through the Latin idea, Romanians' awareness of being different from neighboring peoples, and their need to develop a culture in the national language and in line with their own heritage, led to a paradoxical solution for cultivating Romanian uniqueness: imitation. Beginning with Ioan Heliade-Rădulescu (1802–1872), who stressed the Latin idea by exaggerating the elements that the Romanian shared with the Italian, "latinizers" pursued a cultural practice that imitated and adopted western culture. He and others insisted vigorously on developing the Romanian language through translations from western culture and imitation of western forms, including wide-scale incorporation of neologisms. The effort worked: the poet Alecsandri won a prize in Avignon for "*Cîntecul gintei latine*" ("The Song of the Latin Tribe"), in symbolic recognition of a westernism realization of which continued to be difficult.

Another effect of the "latinizing" impulse was the opposition it engendered. In 1840, for instance, a new publication entitled *Dacia literară* (Literary Dacia) appeared, and entered into open combat with the trend toward imitation, censuring "the disposition for imitation" as a "dangerous mania" that "kills. . . the national spirit."[4] Even more decisive was the movement promoted by the *Junimea* literary society, founded in Iaşi in 1863, whose *spiritus rector* was the literary critic Titu Maiorescu (1840–1917). Through Maiorescu's criticism and through the literary, political, and ideological works of poet Mihai Eminescu (1850–1889), playwright I. L. Caragiale (1852–1912), and prose-writer lon Creanga (1839–1889), Romanian literature attained real excellence. Maiorescu offered a harsh assessment of the entire culture of his time, seeking, in the name of "a nationalism within the bounds of truth," to restrict his contemporaries' uncritical enthusiasm for a literature devoid of great virtues, on the one hand, and to reveal the authentic values on which a modern culture might build on the other hand. His theory of "forms

4. See the text of the introduction to I. Hangiu, ed., *Presa literară românească: Articole program din ziare şi reviste (1789–1948)*, 2 vols. (Bucureşti, 1968), pp. 82–84. See also Maria Platon, *Dacia literară: Destinul unei reviste, viaţa unei epoci literare* (Bucureşti, 1974).

without substance" ("*formele fără fond*") described Romania as a society that advanced with no definite purpose, proliferating institutions that lacked any content because they had not developed organically with the forms adopted; he decried the urgent desire for modernization that led to appropriating the "forms" of western social and intellectual life but not their "substance."

Siding with Maiorescu's harsh judgment of servile imitation of western culture was Eminescu, who also believed that "an authentic enduring literature that should please us and be original for others ought to be based on nothing other than the living speech of our own people, on its heritage, customs, and history."[5] His extreme perfectionism, the excellence of his literary work, the fervor with which he nurtured his beliefs and utopian ideas, his sociological conceptions of the positive classes of society (the great landowners and the peasants), and his political thought—all expressed in a highly persuasive and polemical journalism—have made his positions immensely authoritative and influential down to the present day.

The nineteenth-century effort to specify Romania's cultural uniqueness led to the dilemma of "imitation" (or Europeanism) vs "tradition" that was to recur in endless varieties. An example was the contrast between the earliest forms of Romanian modernism (symbolism) and the traditionalism and ruralism that was promoted by the magazine *Sămănătorul* (The Sower) between 1901–1910 to confront it. Their divergent views were mediated by the publication *Viaţa românească* (Romanian Life) from 1906 to 1916 and 1920 to 1940, whose moral and social program was the foundation of the trend known as Populism. The nineteenth century was also responsible for the diverse meanings accorded the highly complex and contradictory concept of "tradition." Its elements variously included the Latin idea, the Thracian idea, the idea of an archaic Geto-Dacian heritage, idealization of the medieval past, an emphasis on rurality and later on the Orthodox religion, and a number of such antinomies as pagan and Christian, lay and clerical, cultivated and rustic, rural and urban, and the like. These elements formed an ideological complex that was hotly debated in the interwar period.

5. Mihai Eminescu, "Notiţe bibliografice," *Timpul* 5;101, (May 6, 1880), pp. 2–3; 102 (May 7, 1880); 103 (May 8, 1880). In P. Marcea, ed., *Naţional şi universal* (Bucureşti, 1975), p. 19.

The moment that reopened the debate on the national essence was the union of all Romanian provinces into a single state in 1918. The intelligentsia now felt an urge to give a more accurate account of the spiritual unity of the nation and to secure for it an enduring foundation, but external factors were also important. The older generations had learned the teachings of Michelet's nationalistic historical school, had absorbed Herder, were familiar with Hegel and Fichte and, to some extent, had appropriated Taine's positivistic determinism. Along with these positivist and historicist influences, their work showed the mark of German conceptions of the philosophy of culture, the nationalism of Barres, or even the nationalist and monarchic conservatism of Charles Maurras, and diverse trends within contemporary European rationalism, sociology, and psychology.

Contributors to the debate came from all disciplines and regarded themselves not as mere professors, historians, or writers but virtually as prophets, apostles, or moral instructors acting on behalf of society. G. Ibrăileanu and other Populist intellectuals, for example, spoke of their duty to the rural classes. Eugen Lovinescu, Ibrăileanu, and C. Rădulescu-Motru investigated the national essence as part of larger questions of global economic, political, and moral development. Whether they saw the national essence as something given once and for all, requiring only proper definition, or as a phenomenon that was constantly changing, all participants posited for it one or another normative component and joined the practice of cultural life to social action. Because different groups saw this normative component differently, it forms an important means of distinguishing the positions advanced.

The Literary Scene in the Interwar Years: Overview

In many respects the new literary ideology of the early years after the Great War was based on old ideas, but they underwent a change, hardly perceptible at the beginning, which ended by dividing into two deeply opposed camps what had initially been a far more complex field of publications and ideas, too numerous to do more than mention here. It had included various forms of populism, symbolism, avant-gardism, realism, decadentism, and modernism. The publications that sustained this diversity were legion, and they were led by the great publications *Gândirea*, discussed also by Hitchins in this

volume, and *Viaţa românească* and to a lesser extent by *Sburătorul* and *Revista Fundaţiilor Regale;* but one must also add a great number of active literary publications of widely varying types: organs of particular groups and literary societies, literary supplements of the major dailies, individual or group initiatives, "personal" magazines, left-wing magazines, avant-garde publications, and the like. Their common trait was brief existence. Of eighty major publications,[6] forty ran for less than three years.[7]

This proliferation of publications was part of a broader institutional fervor, based to some extent on the enlarged scope of Romanian literature owing to the incorporation of the new provinces, which inspired many new novelistic projects not bound by the cramped quarters of pre-war Romania.[8] There was also the founding of the

6. A comprehensive list of the most influential ones would include: *Adevărul literar şi artistic, Albatros, Azi, Bilete de papagal, Bluze albastre, Boabe de grâu, Cadran, Cadran* (1934), *Capricorn, Cercetări literare, Cetatea literară, Clopotul, Contimporanul, Convorbiri literare, Cosînzeana, Cuget clar, Cugetul liber, Cultura proletară, Cuvântul liber, Datina, Discobolul, Era nouă, Facla, Furnica, Gazeta de Transilvania, Gândirea, Gând românesc, Graiul nostru, Hiena, Iconar, Ideea europeană, Integral, Insemnări ieşene, Insemnări literare, Jurnalul literar, Kalende, Lamura, Lanuri, Lectura pentru toţi, Letopiseţi, Literatorul, Luceafărul, Manifest, Mişcarea literară, Muzica şi poezie, Năzuinţa, Neamul românesc literar, Poezia, Preocupări literare, Rampa, Ramuri, Reporter, Revista Fundaţiilor Regale, Revista literară, Ritmul vremii, România literară* (1925–1928), *România literară* (1932–1934), *Săptămîna muncii intelectuale şi artistice, Sburătorul, Scrisul românesc, Sepia, Sinteza, Studii literare, Şantier, Ţara noastră, Umanitatea, Universul literar, unu, Urmuz, Veac nou, Viaţa imediată, Viaţa literară, Viaţa românească, Vitrina literară, Vremea, 75 HP:* see *Dicţionar cronologic. Literatura română*, coord. I. C. Chiţimia and Al. Dima (Bucureşti, 1979), index. For a global picture of the Romanian literary press, see I. Hangiu, *Presa literară românească*, as well as D. Micu, *Scriitori, cărţi, reviste* (Bucureşti, 1980), pp. 5–75.

7. Pending a comprehensive bibliography of Romanian periodicals, it is difficult to give a complete picture of interwar Romanian magazines. A partial perspective is offered by Ileana Stanca Desa, Dulcin Morărescu, Ioana Patriche, Adriana Raliade, and Ileana Sulica, *Publicaţiile periodice româneşti*, vol. 3 (1919–1924) (Bucureşti, 1907). Of 3398 publications recorded in this volume, 2516 are Romanian, 32 Romanian publications in foreign countries, 13 publications in foreign languages edited by Romanians abroad, and 837 titles in other languages, edited in Romania. Since fewer than 200 titles are reissues, it seems that the number of newly issued periodicals in the years just following the end of World War I amounted to no less than 3200 (cf. Nae Antonescu, "Bibliografia publicaţiilor periodice româneşti," *România literară* 21:39, (1988), p. 7). For a partial picture of Transylvania, I have found valuable information in Mircea Zaciu, "Cultura în Transilvania între cele doua războaie mondiale," a chapter from a projected history of Transylvania not yet published. A significant phenomenon is that even smaller Transylvanian towns, with a less-developed cultural tradition (Satu Mare, Aiud, Alba Iulia, Beiuş, Bistriţa Năsăud, Deva, Gherla, Mediaş, Turda, Sf. Gheorghe, and the like) had numbers of periodicals.

8. For example, Rebreanu's project for an all-embracing series of novels (which was to include *Ion* and *Răscoala*), Gib Mihăescu's *Rusoaica*, Stere's *În preajma revoluţiei*, and much of the poetry of Ion Pillat.

university in Cluj and the general influx of Romanian writers, eager to found periodicals, into the cities of Transylvania. Writers reorganized themselves within a Society of Romanian Writers; new literary prizes were established to encourage young literati; the first important modern publishers appeared with Cultura Națională and Editura Fundațiilor, whose scope went well beyond the merely commercial objectives of most contemporary publishing houses. In this same period, a number of modern disciplines consolidated themselves with works of exceptional and authoritative character.[9] Literary life was active and fervent, its products appearing in hundreds of magazines, read by a wide public, and in famous polemics, often sharp and hostile.[10]

During this period, there occurred a change in the status of "writer," as those for whom writing was their only source of income (such men as Mihail Sadoveanu, Liviu Rebreanu, and Cezar Petrescu) appeared as professionals. We lack a systematic study of the condition of interwar Romanian writers, which could tell us a great deal about this process.[11] If in the nineteenth century, Romanian writers, and particularly the Moldavian ones, belonged mainly to the gentry and to the class of "boyars," the beginning of the modern epoch found their social origin to be more often bourgeois (a class that included the rural intelligentsia, the origin of many Transylvanian writers). The writers of earlier times had hardly ever attended a university, but most interwar writers held university degrees, some of them becoming university teachers following studies at home or abroad (Tudor Vianu, Ion Barbu, Lucian Blaga, Mihai Ralea, Mircea Eliade, and many others). Others occupied positions

9. For example, the writings of D. D. Roşca and—especially—Lucian Blaga in philosophy, Tudor Vianu and Liviu Rusu in aesthetics, Mircea Eliade in religious hermeneutics, Eugen Lovinescu and G. Călinescu in literary history, etc.

10. Besides Z. Ornea, *Tradiționalism și modernitate în deceniul al treilea*, D. Micu, *"Gîndirea" și gîndirismul*, and Ov. S. Crohmălniceanu, *Literatura română între cele două războaie mondiale*, I (Introduction, pp. 9–172) and III, Part II (Critica, pp. 114–400), see the excellent volume *Atitudini și polemici în presă literară interbelică*, ed. Marin Bucur (Bucureşti, 1984); Ileana Vrancea, *Confruntări în critica deceniilor IV-VII (E. Lovinescu și posteritatea lui critică)* (Bucureşti, 1975). A good synthesis is Zoe Dumitrescu-Buşulenga, ed., *Istoria literaturii române. Studii* (Bucureşti, 1979) (especially chs. 11–13, by N. Manolescu).

11. For the nineteenth century a good analysis is offered by Mihai Dinu Gheorghiu, "Notes on the Institutionalization of Romanian Literature in the 19th Century," *Cahiers roumains d'études littéraires*, no. 1, (1988), pp. 56–64. Supplementary information is given in *Scriitori români: mic dicționar*, coord. Mircea Zaciu, M. Papahagi and A. Sasu (Bucureşti, 1978).

in the government or in diplomacy (I. Minulescu, Cezar Petrescu, Liviu Rebreanu, Nichifor Crainic, Lucian Blaga, and others). Many of these writers made learned contributions in more than one field—sociology, the philosophy of culture, psychology, and the like—great breadth of interests being one of their essential characteristics. To name but two, E. Lovinescu was not only a literary critic and the leader of a literary society but also a classical scholar, literary historian, sociologist, aesthetician, prose writer, and memoirist; and Lucian Blaga was a poet, playwright, essayist, metaphysician, philosopher of culture, aesthetician, and translator.

Before the first World War, intellectuals had uniformly believed themselves to be exponents of a people whose supreme moral and national aspirations they were called upon to embody and after the war the self-conception of intellectuals became more varied. On the one hand were those who succumbed to an inordinate idealization of rural patriarchalism, described as "natural," uncorrupt instinctuality, the only genuine source of values, and the absolute national identity.[12] They rallied under the banner of a morally obligating "debt" to defend the peasantry. On the other hand were those, led by critic E. Lovinescu, who espoused a modernist ideology and the priority of the aesthetic over the ethnic, and who refused to associate the national spirit with ruralism.[13] Many of them looked to urban Romania for inspiration and saw in westernism and European culture the culmination of Romanians' "Latinism." The division between ruralists and urbanists was not peculiar to Romania, of course, but was everywhere in wider European culture of the time.

The ideological confrontation between these orientations reached its climax at the end of the 1930s. It was not a sharply divided and strongly polarized society, for the reality was more dynamic and more complex, and people's commitments, and friendships, were unpredictable. So enlightened and classical a spirit as Vianu belonged to the increasingly right-wing *Gândirea* group throughout that magazine's whole existence, while Blaga, a writer partial to mystery and spirituality (which *Gândirea* espoused), came under strong attack by that same magazine. Radulescu-Motru, initially a

12. This view was particularly characteristic of the "Sămănătorists."

13. See Eugen Lovinescu, *Istoria literaturii române contemporane, 1900–1937* (Bucuresti, 1937).

conservative philosopher, was to become a defender of reason during the period of the dictatorship. So radical and antidemocratic a spiritualist as Petre Marcu-Balş was later to be transformed into the brilliant left-wing essayist Petre Pandrea. George Călinescu, before becoming an ironic opponent of the whole "gândirist" trend, had been one of its supporters; the future leftist Zaharia Stancu, too, was a notorious "gândirist"; and so it went.

Because most of the intellectuals involved in the debates of the 1920s did not regard themselves as representing any concerted party policy, the positions they took in this intellectual and cultural dialogue were much more nuanced and diverse than the political-party options of the day. This accounts in part for the paradoxical affiliations just noted. After 1933, however, as the political scene deteriorated into a succession of dictatorships, assassinations, and savage vendettas, the cultural dialogue also became radicalized into a more vicious polemic. Many of the greatest talents associated themselves with the emerging right wing and the left-wing press made a poor showing. Although left-wing periodicals produced some of the most interesting positions and the best written and most scathing texts, many of their ideological articles were so heavily infused with Stalinism that they could hardly function as a rigorous and coherent contraposition to the aberrations of the right.[14]

Given how poorly Romanian literature and culture are known outside Romania, it seems preferable to avoid an analysis based on reductive schemes that would compel a diverse and contradictory reality into a straitjacket, and to opt instead for an approach that is chiefly informative and interpretive, within the general lines set forth by Karl Mannheim in distinguishing ideology from utopia. He defined the former as "the situationally transcendent ideas which never succeed *de facto* in the realization of their projected contents" and the latter as "a state of mind. . . incongruous with the state of reality within which it occurs."[15] I take as axiomatic the ideological character of all the descriptive systems concerning the Romanian

14. Particularly those by N. D. Cocea, Eugen Jebeleanu, Miron Radu Paraschivescu, and Geo Bogza. For the most valuable of these positions, cf. Rodica Florea, "Atitudinea revistelor de stînga faţa de tendinţele ideologice şi literare ale epocii," in *Atitudini şi polemici în presa interbelică*, pp. 509–65.

15. Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (London, 1968), pp. 88–89, 173.

"mentality," even though their pragmatic-normative and idealizing component paradoxically also makes them utopian. With Mannheim, I believe these views cannot be reduced to the positions of their partisans in a political party or social class.[16] The exponents of the various points of view were primarily individual personalities; we should find a middle way between sociological determinants and subjective initiative, between the programmatic character of these views and the "creative project" from which they emerged, as part of various philosophies of culture and literary ideologies.

The material from these years is best organized into three general "lines" or orientations, each of which often treated from different angles the very same phenomenon—for example, the world of the peasants. The first line, which we might call "traditionalist-spiritualist," can be traced through the literary review *Sămănătorul* to the "traditionalist" publications that followed it and were influenced by it: *Gândirea* (whose two main lights, Crainic and Blaga, were in only partial agreement), and the "new generation" of the thirties, grouped around the newspapers and magazines *Cuvântul, Curentul,* and *Vremea* (whose principal representatives were Mircea Eliade, Petru Comarnescu, Emil Cioran, Mircea Vulcănescu, and Constantin Noica). This line joins the "traditionalism" of the *Sămănătorul* with the spiritualism of *Gândirea* and the Romanian existentialism of the 1930s. Because this general orientation is the focus of Keith Hitchins paper in this volume, I will not cover it in further detail here, except to say that it formed one of the two major camps into which the interwar literary field eventually polarized. The reader who desires a comprehensive picture of the tendencies of this period should read the Hitchins paper in conjunction with this one.

The second direction includes the metaphysical humanism of Vasile Pârvan (1882–1927) and the "synchronism" of Eugen Lovinescu,[17] along with the post-Maiorescu intellectualism of Şerban

16. One cannot ignore, nonetheless, the authors' professional condition. It is relevant that Crainic was a theologian, Iorga and Pârvan were historians, and Lovinescu was a teacher of Latin, for instance.

17. This discussion of Pârvan's ideas together with Lovinescu's may seem strange. Pârvan had actually been considered a mystic for a long time, and one can note the claims to his name by the whole spiritualist element within Romanian culture. The perplexity aroused by such a framing is clear even in the judgments of the interwar period. To give a single example: in *Spiritualităţi româneşti*, where the chapter devoted to Pârvan is entitled "Premise etniciste în

Cioculescu, Pompiliu Constantinescu, Vladimir Streinu. These critics, associated with Lovinescu (the most important interwar literary critic), were grouped at one time around the magazines *Sburătorul* and *Kalende* but were mostly educated in the literary society "Sburătorul" directed by Lovinescu.

The third direction had its origins in socialist thought and ideologically cut across both "liberalism" and "rusticism" (*tărănism*). It includes the old rationalist cultural sociology and the idealism of the populists, epitomized in the magazine *Viaţa românească* (Romanian Life), along with the new psychosociology of the late 1930s and G. Călinescu's attempt at aesthetic synthesis in his great history of Romanian literature; its main representatives were Ibrăileanu, Mihai Ralea, and Călinescu. It mediates between those who saw Romania's essence in peasant reality, the first orientation mentioned above, and those of the second, who favored rationalism and intellectualism.[18]

We can further distinguish among these three lines according to the public they tried to reach: for the Sămănătorists it was "the people," in a romantic rather than a sociological sense and often amounting to an intellectual and sentimental fiction; for *Viaţa românească* it was a social class that had to be "educated and enlightened"; for Lovinescu and his circle the audience was an intellectual elite. The elitist nature of the debate came increasingly to characterize all three lines from the beginning of the twentieth century to the eve of World War II.

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gîndirea lui Pârvan" (Ethnicist Premises in Pârvan's Thought), Ion Zamfirescu is forced to admit that "Vasile Pârvan was not an ethnicist as an historian nor as an archeologist nor as a philosopher of history. On the contrary, we have seen that his supreme cultural aspirations were linked to the reality of pure ideas" (p. 179). Al. Zub, *Pe urmele lui Vasile Pârvan* (Bucureşti, 1983) is right to assert that "Beginning with his dissertation in Breslau and his book of *Epigraphical Contributions* and ending with *Getica*, he constantly sustained the adhesion of our cultural space to Occidental civilization"; "A mystic? Pârvan was essentially a rationalist, whose interest went very far because he was tempted to seek out constantly, as he puts it, the final cause, which should push a serious historian like him to an extremely vast problematic" (p. 340).

18. A few important names (C. Rădulescu-Motru, P. P. Negulescu, Al. Dima, and others) are absent from my discussion, which concentrates on people active in the literary life of the period.

Literary Ideologies of the Interwar Years: Pârvan and Lovinescu

Although the traditionalists and the spiritualists claimed historian-archeologist Vasile Pârvan as their spiritual mentor (mostly for his work on the sentiment of death among the Thraco-Getae, and perhaps for his brief adherence to gândirism), his views on the national essence place him in another wing of Romanian thought. Pârvan viewed history, archeology, and ancient culture with the eyes of an intellectual who had gone back to the sources of ancient Stoicism; his spiritualism was combined with humanism of a classical type. His most important ideas on the matter of the national essence are found in his inaugural lecture at the University of Cluj in 1919, entitled "Datoria vieţii noastre" (Our Life's Duty).[19] In it he showed that, unlike the traditionalists, who cultivated the national essence as an end in itself, Pârvan saw the national component as a "biological-political" factor, a kind of "raw material" to be shaped rather than pursued for its own sake. He was further distinguished from the traditionalists in his refusal of the principle that a Romanian culture worthy of the name must incorporate the "ethnographic" culture of the folk. For him, the "ethnographic" expresses instinct and stability and lacks the abstract symbolic quality that marks true culture. To seek to translate the one into the other might produce, in his view, "a monster of false civilization."[20]

Pârvan was the first of those (including Lovinescu and Ibrăileanu) who considered the national essence to be absolutely inevitable, not a goal to be pursued, believing that "You are national in any creation of superior culture, not consciously, willingly, but unconsciously, fatally."[21] The paradox of his thought consists in his having found a way to enhance specificity by emphasizing not the particularistic element but the general human one: "The unique means of enhancing the particular is to intensify the generic. If we develop and study thoroughly our culture of the common people and become more spiritualized as citizens of the world, the specifically national subconscious in us that fatally marks any superior creation of art,

19. V. Pârvan, "Datoria vieţii noastre," in *Idei şi forme istorice: Patru lecţii inaugurale* (Bucureşti, 1920) pp. 9–42.
20. Ibid., p. 29.
21. Ibid., p. 27.

philosophy or science. . . becomes more broadly manifest."[22] The enhancing of what is generally human is for him the equivalent of a return to the roots of true culture—Greek and Roman antiquity—which has infused the great western cultures in ways specific to them. To imitate a contemporary western culture, such as the French, would amount, he thought, to imitating a reality of a second order. One ought rather to recover in its pristine form the "Roman idea" in *Romanian* culture, its "mother idea," which would situate Romanian culture firmly within the generic while enhancing its particular qualities. He put the point adamantly: "Not our ferocious Romanianization, towards the vegetatively ethnographic, but our incessant humanization, towards the sublimely human, will create the supreme splendor of a creative Romanian culture."[23] For this reason, I would place this great historian of ancient Geto-Dacia among those other leading humanist intellectuals who promoted the Latin component of the "national soul."

The most important member of that group was literary critic Eugen Lovinescu (1881–1943). From early in his career he was preoccupied with the question of Romania's creative originality, though his early writings were eclectic and impressionistic. His inquiry into the relationship between the ethnic and the aesthetic, and concern over the gap between Romanian and world or European culture, resulted in his influential theory of "synchronism." This theory proposed a synthesis of foreign influences and ethnic particularism that resembled the ideas of Pârvan and even Ibrăileanu: "From the fusion of all foreign influences with the modelling spirit of the race will emerge. . . the art of the future, with sufficient particularities to form a Romanian style."[24] He rejected wholly the traditionalists' premise that the ethnic factor was a necessary prerequisite of the aesthetic, insisting on their separation: "The use of the ethnic as a principle of aesthetic evaluation is. . . a weapon of reaction against synchronism."[25]

22. Ibid., p. 28.
23. Ibid., p. 34.
24. E. Lovinescu, "Etnicul," *Sburătorul* 4:11–12, (1927), p. 134; see also F. Mihăilescu, ed., *Aesthesis carpato-dunărean*, p. 134.
25. Ibid., p. 134.

Lovinescu's theory of synchronism was developed in his three-volume *Istoria civilizației române moderne* (The History of Modern Romanian Civilization) published between 1924 and 1926.[26] A work of both sociology and the philosophy of culture, this book was of overwhelming importance in the interwar period, providing for some the main trigger of the debate about the national essence at that time.[27] The red thread of the book, the idea of synchronism, is drawn from the so-called "law of imitation" formulated by the French sociologist Gabriel Tarde.[28] To this Lovinescu added his interpretation of writings by Romanian theorists, including Maiorescu's theses about "forms without content," the "law of interdependence" of Romanian socialist Gherea (the idea that the developed capitalist countries necessarily make economic and cultural satellites of the less developed countries), Zeletin's sociological analyses of the formation of the Romanian bourgeoisie, and Ibrăileanu's accounts of the sociology and history of culture in his *Spiritul critic în cultura românească* (The Critical Spirit in Romanian Culture). Lovinescu's History is the first modern Romanian work that does not confine itself to either social-political and economic questions or cultural ones, but embraces both sets of problems in one work.

As with Pârvan, Lovinescu's leading idea from a cultural point of view is the Latin idea. "No matter what the mixture of blood in our race, the Latin mentality has left its characteristic and definitive imprint upon it."[29] The contact and intermixture with Slavs, with Byzantine civilization, and with Ottoman influence had brought Oriental psychological elements—fatalism and passivity—into the Romanian character. Orthodoxy had thus constituted an impediment to the development of "a national culture and art": "Nothing Romanian emerged from the shadows and the tranquility of our first holy establishments."[30] Only Romania's contact with the West, Lovinescu maintained, had permitted the return of the "national principle"—

26. I employ here the edition put out in 1972 by Z. Ornea: E. Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației române moderne* (București, 1972).

27. Al. Dima, *Fenomenul românesc sub noi priviri critice*, pp. 5–6.

28. Gabriel Tarde, *Les lois de l'imitation* (Paris, 1890).

29. E. Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației*, p. 67.

30. Ibid., p. 70.

Hussite influence had produced the Romanian translation of the Bible, Calvinist influence had led to the first Romanian printing, Catholic influence had formed the chroniclers and the "Transylvanian School." Lovinescu offered this outspoken conclusion:

> "We consider as our patrimony only the fixed element of our national life and race, not the regrettable and accidental Oriental influences. This is why we consider contact with the West as a resumption of our true ideal and ethnic continuity: unbinding ourselves from those [oriental] social forms now will help us to unbind later the invisible spiritual chains of Ţarigrad and Athos and Kiev, that is to say the ancestral forces of obscurantism and inertia, in order to set ourselves on the road to self-discovery and progress.[31]

Lovinescu's History analyzes, in order, what the author calls "revolutionary forces," "reactionary forces," and "the laws of the formation of Romanian civilization." In contrast to Maiorescu's "form without content," Lovinescu considered that, for nations in Romania's historical circumstances, "the evolution from form to content is the only normal evolution."[32] This can occur only through the revolutionary stage of imitation, part of the laws of synchronism and interdependence. There is, he says, a "spirit of the century" (Tacitus's *saeculum*) that forms "a totality of moral and material conditions configurative of the life of European peoples at a given period of time," dependent on "the intellectual level of evolution" and the "economic situation of that epoch."[33] As communication intensifies, European cultural interdependence increases, forming the ground upon which the principle of imitation can act. (Of course, imitation is not a "fatality" for Romanian literature alone: it is a law of universal validity, applying, for example, also to the European Renaissance.) For cultures that have not undergone intermediary stages of evolution, the law of synchronism forms a revolutionary moment, from which local specificities emerge as individualizing refractions: "Passing from one ethnic milieu to another, an idea is refracted; the angle of refraction constitutes the originality of each nation."[34]

31. Ibid., p. 76.
32. Ibid., p. 149.
33. Ibid., p. 379.
34. Ibid., p. 426.

Lovinescu did not deny national specificity, which like Pârvan he saw as a "fatality." He merely rejected the possibility that genuine development could *begin* from the particular, and he therefore regarded synchronism as crucial, with other forms, in a universal exchange of values. From imitative interaction he anticipated that Romania would develop a culture unique to it and worthy, in turn, of imitation by others. The irreducible basis of Romania's uniqueness he found above all in its literature, which would inexorably bestow on all imitation-based Romanian creations an ethnically specific character:

> Disregarding the necessary distinction between form and contents, some critics have even seen Romanian literature as an annex of French literature. But the literature of a nation rises in fact from the specific nature of its sensibility; it constitutes a chapter of ethnic psychology. . . . To acknowledge a continuity and, thus, a relative psychological unity also implies acknowledging a traditionalism whose value resides in the content [as opposed to the form]."[35]

The Lovinescean line was continued by a constellation of literary critics, among them Pompiliu Constantinescu, Şerban Cioculescu, Vladimir Streinu, and Tudor Vianu. The latter two exercised their influence through the important magazine *Kalende*, an outstanding antitraditionalist publication. As the editorial in the first issue put it, "The traditionalist, national, and Orthodox directives mean, if abused, an assault upon the freedom and intellectual education of this generation."[36] Another major contributor to the discussion, Camil Petrescu (1894–1957), was an initial member of Lovinescu's circle who later turned upside down the posited relationship between the artist and the ethnic stock.[37] Like Lovinescu, he accepted the reality of a "national soul," but he reversed the problem of particular and general, somewhat in the manner of Pârvan. An artist of genius imposes himself not through his particularism, but through what is generally human in him, and this shapes the people he belongs to: "Russian art," he said, "means Tolstoy, Turgenyev, Dostoyevsky,

35. Ibid., p. 326.

36. "Cuvînt înainte," *Kalende* 1:1, (1928); see I. Hangiu, ed., *Presa literară românească*, p. 492.

37. Camil Petrescu, "Sufletul național," in his *Teze și antiteze* (București, 1936), pp. 173–88.

Gogol, Chekhov. It means their soul, which we attribute rightly to the Russian people. It is not the national uniqueness in them that moves us, but what is superior and profoundly human."[38] A great writer is a "spiritual synthesis of a nation" and is responsible for what we call its "specificity." "It is not traditions that make up the soul of a nation, but her writers, thinkers, and artists, no matter how they are as long as they are great. Goethe and Eminescu are not great through their national art, their nations are great through the art of these artists."[39] This position lessened, of course, the dramatic confrontation between those who saw the national essence in "tradition" and who opposed foreign influences, and those who accepted them or even considered them indispensable.

Thus far we have seen that the "line" epitomized by Pârvan and Lovinescu brought into the analysis of Romanians' spiritual evolution and national character several new themes, distinguishing them from "traditionalists" such as Iorga's Sămănătorists, Crainic, and Blaga. These new themes included questions of general human values, the Latin idea, cultural interdependence, synchronism, and the role of the creative personality. This line's antitraditionalism was not its only feature, nor by any means its most essential one, and the divisions were not always clean. Thus, Pârvan was claimed by the "traditionalists" and was considered a mystic by Lovinescu's associate Pompiliu Constantinescu, while Lovinescu himself accepted, along with the traditionalists, the importance of the ethnic factor. Nonetheless, certain significant commonalities united them and distinguished them from others: antiparticularism, the refusal to retreat into cultural isolation, an ecumenical vocation and a cult of individual values, and a refusal of a simplistic identity between the ethnic and the aesthetic, all offered as arguments permitting a better delineation of the problem. If for "traditionalists" the national essence was something in constant danger of losing its authenticity and requiring protection, then for this second group it was understood as a "fatal" or inevitable precondition, the question being not its preservation but the values that could be constructed upon it. The

38. Ibid., p. 181.
39. Ibid., p. 182.

normative aspect of the discussion was thus transposed from the ethical and ethnic plane to the plane of values.

Literary Ideologies of the Interwar Years: Ibrăileanu and Ralea

Garabet Ibrăileanu (1871–1936), the most important ideologist of literary "populism," the editor of the major publication *Viața românească*, and one of Romania's most important literary critics, was the man who initiated the entire debate on the national essence. Populism (*poporanism*) was an ideological current initially reminiscent of Russian narodnicism; as an analysis of Romanian society it rested on "sympathy" for the peasants, but when it was converted into a political platform it materialized into a steady campaign for land reform and universal suffrage among other things. Despite some similarities with the populism of the Sămănătorists, the populism of *Viața românească* was visibly different. Ibrăileanu rejected the claims of *Sburătorul* and of Nicolae Iorga that theirs was the first movement whose goal was "the return to the people": he insisted that all the political and cultural movements in the nineteenth century had widely anticipated this same goal. He derided the Sămănătorists' so-called "peasantism" (*țărănism*) as nothing but "an attraction for the picturesque," in contrast to the peasant literature he himself advocated: a "literature created by the peasant mentality." This literature was, he maintained, the only truly *Romanian* literature, because "only the peasant has a specific mentality; the townspeople and the upper classes have a more or less un-Romanian mentality, the educated class generally forming part of the metropole."[40] It was not that Ibrăileanu was an enemy of foreign influences; he was a firm admirer of Tolstoy and Proust, Baudelaire and Anatole France, and indeed the populist platform included the idea of assimilating European culture, while giving it "the specific mark of our soul."[41] Moreover, as a diligent disciple of the socialist Gherea, Ibrăileanu added the social element: the upper classes and the people are two distinct "nations" that do not communicate on the cultural level.[42] His con-

40. G. Ibrăileanu, "Poporanismul," *Curentul nou* 1:3 (1908); see G. Ibrăileanu, *Opere*, vol. 5 (București, 1974), pp. 555–74); citation is from p. 570 and p. 572.

41. "Către cititori," *Viața românească* 1:1 (1906); see I. Hangiu, *Presa literară românească* vol. 2, p. 130.

42. The Transylvanian Tăslăuanu made the same argument.

viction, expressed in the opening editorial "To the Readers" of *Viața românească*, was that a specific national culture may be attained only through the political, economic, and cultural development of the peasantry, those who must be an active element of cultural life. Like Iorga or Nichifor Crainic, he considered Romania's cultural specificity—at least from an ethical point of view—as closely tied to the rural class, but at the same time, like Lovinescu, he believed that the whole modern evolution of Romanian culture was indebted to western influence. Thus, Ibrăileanu was situated halfway between the traditionalist orientation and that of Lovinescu's group.

What distinguished his position from theirs was the kind of emphasis he placed on the national essence. Lovinescu, in equating Ibrăileanu's populism with Sămănătorism, made a considerable error: Ibrăileanu, unlike the Sămănătorists, thought of the people not only in ethnic terms but also in social ones. In 1911 he wrote, "In literature, populism means an attitude of sympathy with the peasant class"—which does not imply Sămănătorism's idealization of the peasantry (to the contrary) or an aesthetic *parti-pris*.[43] In 1933, as he turned *Viața românească* over to a younger generation, he was more explicit: "*Viața românească* saw something else in the peasant. The *social* peasant, the poor peasant, the peasant that was in need of reforms and development and change. And that change presupposed the complete westernization of the country, the utter destruction of the old forms."[44] Nothing could be further from "Sămănătorism" and "Orthodoxism" than this program, which included the idea of assimilating western culture.

As one can see, the question of the national essence appeared in all of Ibrăileanu's programmatic articles, in one way or another, but he gave it particular attention in two important studies that he dedicated to it. The first, "Caracterul specific național în literatura română" (The Specifically National Character of Romanian Literature), of 1922, is not the most edifying for Ibrăileanu's thought as a whole; because of it Lovinescu accused the author of the same con-

43. My emphasis added. Nicanor & Co. (G. Ibrăileanu), "Iarăși poporanismul," *Viața românească* 6:2 (1911): see I. Hangiu, *Presa literară românească* vol. 2, p. 136.

44. G. Ibrăileanu, "După 27 de ani," *Viața românească* 25:1–2 (1933); see I. Hangiu, *Presa literară românească* vol. 2, p. 542.

fusion of the ethical, ethnic, and aesthetic as the Sămănătorists.[45] In this essay, Ibrăileanu analyzed Romanian literature into its various regional components, finding a more fully "national" character in Moldavia and Transylvania, where intellectuals were closer to the people and their resistance to outside influences stronger. Hence his much debated proposition that "of two writers of equal talent, the greater is the one in whose work the soul of the people is felt more fully and its national realities more richly and better depicted."[46] In "Influenţe străine şi realităţi naţionale" (Foreign Influences and National Realities) of 1925 that equation is nuanced and clarified: foreign influences are productive only if grafted onto local realities, and closeness to "the soul of the people" is a fuller guarantee of proper assimilation.[47]

For Ibrăileanu as for Lovinescu, imitation was an indispensable stage for Romanian culture, equivalent to an "import" ("This imitation of foreign literature is, on the literary side, what the introduction of new forms is on the political side"), but with the provisos that only models suiting the national spirit should be imitated and that real progress would consist only in final emancipation from those models.[48] His cultural program therefore entailed greater "protectionism" toward the national essence than did Lovinescu's, but at the same time he did not see it as deeply jeopardized in quite the way the traditionalists did. For instance, in "Scriitori şi curente" ("Writers and Currents"), published in *Viaţa românească* in 1906, he wrote of literature as "the depository of a nation's soul" and offered the opinion that since it is impossible for a writer *not* to belong to a national entity, "Romanian literature can be nothing other than 'Romanian.' "[49]

Ibrăileanu seems to have believed he could objectively determine exactly what "suits" and what does not suit a given stage of

45. G. Ibrăileanu, "Caracterul specific naţional în literatura română," *Viaţa românească*, 11 (1922); see G. Ibrăileanu, *Opere* vol. 1 (Bucureşti, 1974) pp. 321–36.

46. Ibid., p. 328.

47. G. Ibrăileanu, "Influenţe străine şi realităţi nationale," *Viaţa româeascā* 2 (1925); see G. Ibrăileanu, *Opere* vol. 1, pp. 337–57.

48. Ibid., p. 338.

49. G. Ibrăileanu, "Scriitori şi curente," *Viaţa românească* 1:1 (1906); see I. Hangiu, *Presa literară românească*, vol. 2, p. 135.)

Romania's cultural development. This was the normative element that transformed his "populist" aesthetics into a "poetics," with a program for cultural accumulation. He devised schemes to explain the operation of the cultural mechanism that selects originality and eschews imitation, seeking to explain more adequately the underlying ethnic character Ibrăileanu thought he could detect even at the level of literary personalities. He wrote, "In this brief history of literary development, from imitation and weak national feeling to originality through liberation from oppressive models and nationalism through the influence of the folk spirit. . . one can clearly see that originality grows in tandem with the recruitment of writers from social classes ever closer to the people (Conachi-Alecsandri-Eminescu-Sadoveanu)."[50] It is clear from this why Ibrăileanu is said to "mediate" between the ruralism of *Sămănătorul* and Lovinescu's synchronism.

What is missing from his work, however, is reference to the spiritual or psychological dimension, so often invoked by Orthodoxism and by spiritualist-existentialist currents in the 1930s. The person who attempted to (re)introduce elements of psychology into the analysis of the "Romanian phenomenon" from the antitraditionalist side was Mihail Ralea (1896–1964). A psychologist by training but also a sociologist, an intermittent literary critic and philosopher of culture, and an active political figure in the Peasant party, Ralea had his apprenticeship with *Viaţa românească,* whose editorship he gained (with Călinescu) in 1933. Ralea set himself the task of giving a "psychological characterization of the Romanian people" in his "Fenomenul românesc" (The Romanian Phenomenon).[51] Research of a similar type had been done in other countries as well: Ralea mentions R. Müller-Freinfels' *Psychologie des deutsches Mensches* and A. Fouillée's *Psychologie des peuples européens.* His resort to "a psychology of the people" is free of any theory of race. "The differences among peoples are too little physiological and too much spiritual."[52] But in discussing the relation between the ethnic and the cultural, he diverged spectacularly from the ethnicist doctrines:

50. Ibid., p. 345.

51. M. Ralea, "Fenomenul românesc," in *Intre două lumi* (Bucureşti, 1943), pp. 79–122 (citations here are from F. Mihăilescu, *Aesthesis carpato-dunărean,* pp. 204–38).

52. Ibid., p. 212.

"The ethnic soul," he wrote, "is the result of a culture, of a certain social life. Change the culture and the morals and manners, and the soul of the people will gradually change also."[53] If until that point what had been debated was the *normativeness* or *fatality* (inevitability) of the national essence, Ralea ushered in discussion of its *relativity*. "The ethnic soul is undergoing constant changes. There is not only one ethnic soul."[54] He tackled several factors, one after another (the cultural age of a nation, the relationship between rural and urban, the political, economic, and physical environment). He even retrieved Ibrăileanu's "regionalism," pointing out that an influence is not homogeneously felt across the nation but is relevant only to parts of it. He looked at literature together with philosophy as constituting "the most important sources for determining the mentality of a nation."[55] In his psychological characterization he identified two distinct types: the western type, characterized by "creative ability," and the oriental one, whose main trait is "passive resignation." Ralea located the spiritual structure of the Romanian people between these two poles, as "adaptability" or "the power of adjustment."

Ralea thought of his scheme as even-handed, but it constituted a hierarchy, with Romanian adaptability holding an intermediate position (in his scheme creative ability was at odds with "passive resignation," a quality for which—unlike the traditionalists and the spiritualists—he felt no great sympathy). Adjustment is inferior to creativity, but superior to resignation; it might be the formula for a Romanian "equilibrium," characterized by a "transactional spirit," lack of malice, a natural disposition to progress, an intelligence that is not abstract and speculative but practical, intermittent will. For him, the Romanian lacks imagination and inner life, but is inherently antitraditionalist ("Traditionalism, for a population so mobile and eager as ours, makes no sense").[56] Finally, adaptability is "ambivalent," a blessing in disguise: "It may mean evolution, intelligence, refinement, flexibility, progress, but it can also mean cowardice, duplicity, shrewdness, superficiality. It contains potentials—the possibilities of prosperity and of decadence."[57]

53. Ibid., p. 212.
54. Ibid., p. 213.
55. Ibid., p. 220.
56. Ibid., p. 230.
57. Ibid., p. 238.

The orientation represented by *Viaţa românească* in Romanian culture received its best synthesis in the closing chapter of Călinescu's history of Romanian literature of 1941.[58] Here this exceptional critic and aesthetician tackled the entire *problematique* of the national essence, making good use of all previous endeavors while assuming a neutral stand. He began by rejecting conceptions that denied the Romanian his "differential note," but at the same time he rejected the traditionalists' equating the Romanian essence with the picturesque. He was somewhat inconsistent in saying that, on the one hand, "specificity is not something you acquire through time . . . , it is something congenital," concluding, on the other hand, that "specificity, like race, . . . is in slow but constant movement."[59] But in seeing the national essence as a plurality of traits, he overcame the reductionism of most of the doctrines discussed, which limited the essence to one dominant factor.

As for the relationship between influence and originality, Călinescu was of the same mind as those who, from Pârvan to Lovinescu, were convinced that what is specific to Romanians is a "fatality" that depends upon the ethnic—as was true for Ibrăileanu also—"The guarantee of our fundamental originality rests in the ethnic factor."[60] His masterly history demonstrated the vitality and validity of Romanian literature, its "creative vigour, with its specific notes, a national contribution to world literature."[61] Călinescu saw as basic to Romanians' character "the regression toward an archaic type of civilization, a passivity toward nature"—which he regarded as a symptom of age rather than of youth ("We are not primitive, we are old")—correlated with a striking lack of "subjective expression of experience" and a bent for "ritualism."[62] To that he added an "energetic fatalism" that he saw as not characteristically Oriental and as the equivalent of robust skepticism, a propensity for criticism, and the like. He brought into focus the contribution of other ethnic elements besides the autochthonous one, and he argued that "Latinity" had been deeply modified by the "Getic spirit." Thus Călinescu endeav-

58. G. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române de la origini pîna în prezent* (Bucureşti, 1941).
59. Ibid., p. 885, 888.
60. Ibid., p. 885.
61. Ibid., p. 886.
62. Ibid., p. 887.

ored to encompass in a single essayistic discourse the whole range of previous contributions, converting everything into an assertion of the cultural validity of Romanian literature.[63]

The three general orientations in this series of debates shared a few broad traits: (a) in several cases, a complex theoretical debate was gradually reduced into a militant platform; (b) the various emphases augmented their doctrines with practical claims that amounted to strategies of cultural action (which was, in some cases, more than strictly cultural); and (c) each of the three main lines and their subordinate groupings strove for comprehensiveness, bringing in history, psychology, literary creation, morals, politics, and the like. In addition, despite their differences, none of the positions proved superior to the others in the cultural values produced under its aegis. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, works of value were generated from within each of these orientations, which shows that in terms of their *cultural* efficacy, the positions are indistinguishable. It is only their political entailments and implications that differed significantly.

Conclusion

All these points of view, doctrines, and theories emerged in relation to a set of problems in Romania's social and political life. They constituted an attempt by cultural elites to intervene in the sphere of decision making, offering what they considered competent evaluations about what should be done. All the positions show that sense of responsibility for the social milieu which we might see as itself an "essential" characteristic of all theories on the national essence, and which remains a continuing trait of Romanian intellectuals who feel called upon to keep pondering upon this subject. Debate on it has never lost momentum in the realm of Romanian culture despite differences in the social, political, and historical circumstances in which Romanian thinkers have pursued their interest in the national essence.

Extensive quotations from the work of various authors will not only enable greater appreciation of the significant themes of Romania's literary ideology and philosophy of culture in the interwar

63. For a subtle and sophisticated discussion of Călinescu's situation in his times, see Mircea Martin, *G. Călinescu şi "complexele" literaturii române* (Bucureşti, 1981).

period but they will also prove useful to those interested in the continuing contemporary relevance of the debates, within a changed context. The troubled times following World War II and the devastation of values brought about by "proletcultism" imposed a new cultural isolation upon Romanian writers. This augmented their earlier inferiority complex, as happened also in other Eastern European cultures, and provoked yet another round of concern about what makes Romania unique and how it is to be integrated into or protected from the values of other cultures.[64] In the 1960s and 1970s, the debates on the national essence and on Romania's cultural relationships with the Orient and the West were resumed, in arguments every bit as bitter and irreconcilable as those presented here.

64. Some of these renewed arguments are described in Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1991).

Zarathustra in Red Croatia: Milan Šufflay and His Theory of Nationhood

IVO BANAC

Milan Šufflay (1879–1931) is undoubtedly the most distinguished unknown among the major public figures of twentieth-century Croatia. Very few historians have attempted to lift the obscurity that has confined his exploits and views.[1] This much is usually known: Šufflay was assassinated in February 1931, the high point of King Aleksandar's royal dictatorship, by special agents of the Zagreb political police. The assassination provoked an international outcry and condemnation of Yugoslav white terror by some of the era's most notable exponents of human rights, including Albert Einstein and Heinrich Mann. Šufflay was buried as a Croat national martyr under the arcades of Zagreb's Mirogoj cemetery, in the same tomb as Stjepan Radić (1871–1928), the assassinated leader of the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS).

More knowledgeable people also know that Šufflay was a scion of an impoverished gentry family (Šufflay de Othrussewecz) of Würtembergian or Saxon origin, which was ennobled by Leopold I in 1675 in the district of Samobor, near Zagreb. Šufflay's grandfather, a hatmaker by profession, settled in Krapina, Varaždin County. His son Augustin, Šufflay's father, was a schoolteacher in Lepoglava, the town notorious as the site of the principal prison in Croatia. Augustin married a lady of German gentry stock from Hungary, who had reason to downplay the family's genteel poverty by nurturing its pride of gentle birth. Milan Šufflay was a classic prodigy, consistently the best student in his class (1897) in Zagreb's gymnasium, the historian Tadija Smičiklas's favorite at the University of Zagreb, degree holder with a finished doctoral dissertation at the tender age

1. See most notably Josip Horvat, *Hrvatski panoptikum* (Zagreb, 1965), pp. 169–228.

of twenty-two. Moreover, he held independent and frequently nonconformist views. His specialty was not Croatian (medieval) history in any narrow sense. Contrary to the general practice of the time, he specialized in the history of the Balkans, thereby opting to study Croatia in its Balkan and eastern aspects. The title of his dissertation was "Croatia and the Last Exertions of the Eastern Empire Under the Scepter of the Three Comneni (1075–1180)." This interest increasingly directed him to the troubled history of the southern Adriatic littoral—the lands of ancient Dioclea (Duklja) and Dyrrachium (Durazzo, Alb. Durrës), that is, to the study of Montenegrin and Albanian history. He became the greatest Albanologist of his generation, unsurpassed in some respects to date.

The scholarly side of Šufflay's activities would not have brought him to public attention were it not for his decidedly political engagement. It is generally assumed that Šufflay was a lukewarm Frankist, that is, the follower of the Croat Party of (State) Right (HSP), a minor, decidedly urban, and largely petit bourgeois, nationalist organization, which traced its origin to Josip Frank (1844–1911). The Frankists were known as the most determined opponents of Hungarian hegemony, South Slavic unity, and especially Serb national sentiment in Croatia. They favored a trialistic solution to the national question in the Habsburg Monarchy, whereby the South Slavic parts of the Monarchy would emerge as the Monarchy's separate third unit, based on the legitimizing agency of ancient Croat state right. After the collapse of the Monarchy and the establishment of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (Yugoslavia) they held an isolated position on the fringe of the Croat national movement, at the mercy of Radić's HSS, which they alternately reviled and grudgingly trailed.[2]

Though not a Frankist of some standing, Šufflay certainly was involved in the activities of the Frankist movement. He was arrested toward the end of 1920 for his alleged ties with the émigré Frankist Croat Comité, a insurrectionary organization dedicated to the establishment of an independent Croatia. Despite his evident inability to

2. For more on the Frankists see Ivo Banac, *National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics* (Ithaca, NY., 1984), pp. 94–95, 260–70.

play the rôle of a genuinely dangerous conspirator, he was nevertheless sentenced to a term of forty-two months, half of which he served. More important, Šufflay was a frequent contributor to *Hrvatsko pravo* (Croatian [State] Right), the organ of the legal Frankist HSP. His writings, both polemicist and scholarly, offer a unique insight into the ideology of conservative Croat nationalism, midway between its classic Frankist form and its disintegration with the rise of Ustaša radicalism, conceived and charged with fascist ideas by Ante Pavelić, a prominent Frankist of the 1920s. Most important, Šufflay's writings express a mnemonistic theory of nationhood, which is typical not just of Croat or nationalistic views, but is highly representative of the spatial Central European concepts of nationhood, in which the past (no matter how distant) is at one with the present.

For Šufflay, a good historian was at the very least a recorder of historical facts and thereby served as the pedal that moved the collective μνήμη (mnēmē, memory) of a nation. Historical "recorders" of better quality disposed of an enormous mnemonic apparatus of their national communities.[3] They searched the nation's essential characteristics and provided the guideposts on the road to a secure national allegiance even in the most difficult moments. They "occasionally actively awakened the ancient mnemonic clichés, which otherwise would have remained buried in the people's subconsciousness."[4] In Šufflay's view that meant drawing attention to the process of nation-forming. His nation was a gigantic cell, one of Haeckel's great protists, which was the end product of phyletic evolution that commenced with the repulsive totem.[5] Following Spengler he believed that nations were folk groups which build cities. They rose in castles, they ripened to the full height of world consciousness in cities, and they are disintegrating in megalopolises.[6] More exactly, nations were gentile evolutionary products that were moved by national self-consciousness. In the seventeenth-century Balkans "there were no

3. Milan Šufflay, "Značajke hrvatske nacije," *Hrvatsko pravo*, Aug. 4, 1928, p. 1.

4. Milan Šufflay, "Crvena Hrvatska," *Pantheon*, 1 (1929), no. 1:2.

5. Alba Limi (pseud. Milan Šufflay), *Kostadin Balšić (1392–1402): Historijski roman u tri dijela* (Zagreb, 1920), p.51.

6. Milan Šufflay, "Bezvremeno selo," *Hrvatsko pravo*, July 6, 1929, p. 2.

nations in the contemporary sense; the popular masses were moved by religion."[7]

This does not mean that Šufflay's nations were the products of nationalist ideology (imagined communities, or mere artefacts of the late eighteenth-century age of nationalism). Nations were proto-giants (*praorijaši*) and his evolutionary historicism necessarily had to account for the length of their development. Since Šufflay was an opponent of every attempt to apply the findings of individual psychology to the study of social groups (interpsychology, interaffect, national psyche, and the rest, were for him clumsy anthropomorphic analogies), he preferred to coin a new terminology with a "tellurian" perspective.[8] This new terminology was entirely atmospheric and geological in origin. Tribes, or "small national fogs" (*nacijonalne maglice*) in Šufflay's terminology, were the primary gentile embryos of nations. Before the Roman colonization of the Balkans, the Illyrian and Thracian aborigines were a typical tribal population, "divided into numberless bigger or smaller groups in internecine combat and, moreover, representing the vacillating, mobile plasma, since their way of life was nomadic."[9] Roman rule coincided with intensive Romanization, which created new Romance nuclei. Then came the "great cyclone" of *Völkerwanderung*. The "Roman dike" was broken, making way for the "torrent" of nomads. After the flood, the lowlands were peopled by the "sedentary Slavic race, which, without the impulse of nomadic blood, everywhere, like the Chinese, sticks to the ground."[10]

This was not the end of Balkan "ethnic cyclones." The defeated races and their languages were preserved in the highlands of modern Albania, Thessaly, and the Carpathians. As an Albanologist, Šufflay viewed the history of Albania, which he defined as the "perpetual building of small tribal fogs and the destruction of old gentile systems," as an historical paradigm. Rome diluted the primary Illyrian tribes in whose stead rose the medieval Albanian tribes. The highlands preserved this race of warriors from destruction and pesti-

7. [Milan Šufflay], "Podzemna tutnjava na Balkanu," ibid., Aug. 27, 1924, p. 2.
8. Limi, p. 51.
9. Milan Šufflay, "Etnički cikloni na Balkanu: Nacijonalni mozaik u Maćedoniji i njegov postanak," *Obzor*, Jan. 17, 1924, p. 1.
10. Ibid.

lence. In time they descended into the war-weary lowlands, still intact in their tribal characteristics. But not for long; the families of their chieftains were in the vanguard of detribalization. The dynasts of Zeta and Albania already formed Šufflay's "little state nuclei" (*državne jezgrice*), which willingly were succumbing to the blandishments of Byzantine, Serbian, and Angevin feudalisms. These dynasts in turn "became sebastoi, protosebastoi, despots, kaznaces, grand župans, milites, comites, and marshals."[11] They undermined the rights of the lesser tribesmen (in Slavic Balkans, lit. *plemići*, meaning both tribesmen and petty nobles) and tribal sanguinary ties. Before they could constitute their own durable state(s), they were upturned by the Ottoman Turks in the fifteenth century. Skenderbeg's Albania was the "last significant Christian state in the Balkans."[12]

The ambitions of the late medieval dynasts undermined the national principle in the prenational period. The Balšićes, a leading dynastic family which Šufflay described in his novel *Kostadin Balšić* (1920), were typical in this respect: "The Balšićes were of Vlach—Romanian—origin, rated as Albanians, held a Serbian chancery, and considered themselves the inheritors of [Stefan] Dušan's empire . . . The second generation of Balšićes, three brothers with the rank of župan, were no more than three wild shepherd headmen. The third generation was infused with a fine mixture of Serb and Greek blood . . . The wolf [Djuradj I Balšić] mated with the fox [Kyra Theodora, daughter of Sebastocrator Dejan]."[13] Konstadin Balšić, the novel's tragic antihero, whom Šufflay fashioned in a faithful rendition of the mysterious late fourteenth-century prince, dreamed of reviving the "powerful idea" of Dušan's empire. His slogan is "Dušania or death."[14]

The process of state-building, with its concomitant attack on the gentile community, was derailed in the Turkish Balkans. The Ottoman period created the conditions for the revival of tribes. "When the Turks in the fifteenth century exterminated or subjugated the

11. Milan Šufflay, "Nacijonalne maglice: Sredovječna plemena Albanije i Crne Gore," ibid., Feb. 24, 1924, p. 3.

12. Milan Šufflay, "Sredovječni dinaste Albanije i Crne Gore," ibid., April 19, 1924., p. 3.

13. Limi, p. 16, 18.

14. Ibid., pp. 97, 168.

tiny dynasts of Albania and Zeta, the time of pastoral *katun* [canton] had arrived. This age was full of premordial inherited structures. It was armed with a slingshot, stick, and poisoned arrow. It was pregnant with the protoinstinct of self-preservation, blood feud, fury, and brotherhood by adoption [*pobratimstvo*]. It devoured the tame villages of the lowlands and with them the Byzantine-Serbian legal institutions, covering for the third time the territory of Albania (and, for the second time the territory of Montenegro, following the original Slavic tribal areas) with powerful tribal entities, which have continued until now."[15] Repeated attempts "to turn the organized tribes into hierarchical state amoebas" succeeded sporadically. "Tribal power in the existential sense created a political unit out of Montenegro." In the Croat north, this process experienced no reversals and took an early feudal form, as royal state power turned tribal commons into noble communes.[16]

Nothing unusual, so far. Following the classic theory of nationhood Šufflay believed that the nations of Southeastern Europe developed in the modern period, partially under the thin crust of Ottoman (or, for that matter, other foreign states) and partially in their own states.[17] For all that, nation and its antecedents (gens, phyle, tribe) did not belong to the purely spatial concepts in Šufflay's view of history. Far more important were the concepts of geopolitics, historical retort, civilization, and, of course, memory. Šufflay repeatedly reasserted his belief in the precedence of geopolitics: "The Earth's crust, mountain chains, flow of rivers, great lowlands, deserts, and seas are older and far more powerful factors that attend the historical creation of states than the very concept of nation or of historical right."[18] He stressed the importance of the state, Byzantine-Ottoman state retort being the crucible of the Serbs that distinguished them from the Croats.[19] He believed in the lasting cleavages among civilizations, notably between the East and the West, which, as we shall see, he saw as both clashing and interpenetrating. But most impor-

15. Šufflay, "Nacijonalne maglice," p. 3.

16. Milan Šufflay, "'Županija varaždinska': Stari krovovi i stara krv Zagorja," *Obzor*, Jan. 18, 1927, p. 2.

17. Milan Šufflay, "Prasjedioci na Balkanu," ibid., May 1, 1927, p. 2.

18. [Milan Šufflay], "Geopolitičke sile," *Hrvatsko pravo*, Oct. 20, 1924, p. 1.

19. Milan Šufflay, "Značajke Hrvatske nacije: Esej o Vjekoslavu Klaiću," *Hrvatsno pravo*, Aug. 4, 1928, p. 3.

tant, he believed in the great influence of memory, that integrating and otherwordly power (*sila drugoga svijeta*), which is the equivalent of the force of gravity in the animate world.

Šufflay's mnemonism was a product of several traditions. Building on Bergson's view of human brain as the specific exponent of the germ of life, Šufflay held that the "problem of germ and brain was illuminated still more deeply by the theory of 'mneme,' or memory, conceived by the German Semon (1912). According to this theory germ or egg builds an 'imago' or full somatic form based on phyletic memory, that is, based on past experience of the whole line of vital ancestors." He butressed his argument with further evidence from Haeckel (biogenetic law), Freud (the Unconscious), Weissmann and De Vries (*Keimbahn*), and the like.[20] In practice this meant that "in every individual all of his forebears lived mnemonically, and in a single generation all the generations of the dead."[21] Knowledgeable observers (unlike R.W. Seton-Watson and Wickham Steed, Šufflay's favorite targets) knew that the "rows of dead generations collaborated in the activities of living popular masses.[22] And Konstantin Balšić and his evil wife Jelena Thopia were "two demonic beings, in whose blood danced the unattainable rows of prior generations."[23]

Šufflay's attachment to mnemonism went as far as positing the memory of inanimate objects. The mnēmē of Konstantin's damascened sword was powerful, "because strength and elasticity together were a sort of memory, which is lacking only in gas or liquid."[24] Most important, memory was the stuff of historical consciousness, the means by which the peoples preserved their individuality and perpetuated their links with their past. All the seventeenth-century Albanians (*da tutti gl' Albanesi*), that is both Muslims and Christians, sang about the anti-Turkish exploits of their fifteenth-century hero Skenderbeg, even in the presence of the Turks.[25] The story of Dioclean prince Saint Vladimir and his love for Kosara, the daughter of his captor Bulgarian tsar Samuil, "is perhaps the legend most

20. Milan Šufflay, "Suton zapadne civilizacije," *Pantheon*, 1 (1929), no. 3:78–79.

21. Milan Šufflay, "Hrvati nisu kunići!: Stručan odgovor Wickhamu Steedu," *Hrvatsko pravo*, Sept. 20, 1928, p. 2.

22. Š. [Milan Šufflay], "Talijanska štampa," ibid., Jan. 8, 1925, p. 1.

23. Lima, p. 93.

24. Ibid., p. 165.

25. Šufflay, "Sredovječni dinaste," April 19, 1924, p. 3.

widely and deeply embedded in the national memory of the Balkans." Šufflay himself apparently witnessed the veneration of the cross from the Church of the Most Immaculate Virgin of Krajina (on the west bank of the Lake of Skadar) by the Catholics, Orthodox, and Muslims, both Montenegrins and Albanians, of the Montenegrin littoral. This was two centuries after the destruction of the church and seven centuries after the transfer of Vladimir's remains first to Durrës and then to Elbasan, in Albania.[26] The murder of King Dmitar Zvonimir was preserved in Croat folk memory for over eight centuries. By way of parallel, the battle between Emperor Alexius Comnenus and the Normans at Durrës (1081) was celebrated in the folk songs of Dubrovnik as late as the sixteenth century, the boats from Dubrovnik having participated in the battle on the Norman side.[27] Most astonishing, the memory of the South Slavs reached back to their protohomelands beyond the Carpathians and even preserved the elements of their pre-Christian dualist religion.

Šufflay was quite cheered by the findings of Czech scholar Jan Peisker, who concluded that the ancient Slavs were Zoroastrian dualists. The main proof was in the use of the term *deva*, which conveyed the evil spirit in the Zendic texts of Zarathustra's Avesta. Christianized Slavs—and the South Slavs were the first to undergo Christianization—"lost the concept of *deva* (= evil spirit) and substituted it with the concept of *deva* (*djevojka* = maiden)." But the ubiquity of such toponyms as Djevin silaz (Maiden's Descent) and Djevin skok (Maiden's Jump) pointed to a pre-Christian cult, which, Šufflay agreed, went back to Zarathustra's religion. In fact, the most concentrated area of Zoroastrian traces among the South Slavs "was between the rivers Neretva and Drim, in Old Dioclea or Red Croatia, as it was called by the [chronicler] Priest of Dioclea." Šufflay augmented Peisker's theory by noting that "In the old Croatian Župa of Cetina there was in 1091 a place called Nebog [lit. non-god], then in 1362 a place called Nebesa [lit. non-demons], and in 1422 on the island of Korčula a place called Divin dolac [lit. Maiden's or Demon's Field]. One can read in a Ragusan text that in 1422 there

26. Milan Šufflay, "Sveti Jovan Vladimir: Prečista Krajinska i monastir Šin-Gjon," ibid., May 16, 1925, p. 5.

27. Milan Šufflay, "Vjesnik Kr. Državnog arhiva u Zagrebu: O kralju Zvonimiru i njegovim listinama," ibid., April 24, 1928, 2.

was a cave called Bezbozi at the Dračevac frontier (*un monticello petroso tutto quando chiamato Besbossi*) and that at the top of that hill there was *una chamenizza chiamatta Besbogovo Coritto*. To this day one can find there a village called Bezboge, but not after the Bezbozi family . . . but rather that family is called after the hill Besbog or Bijesbog [lit. demon god], where there was a lair or *korito* of a *bijes*, evil spirit, or *deva*. Such a lair of demons (*ignei serpentes*) is cited in the legend of Saint Vladimir on the hill of Oblik, west of Skadar [Shkodër]."[28] Moreover, writing before the spread of the Iranian theory on the origin of Croat ethnonym, a theory that also posited the Iranian origin of the terms White (northern) and Red (southern) Croatia, Šufflay held that the very name Red Croatia was a mnemonic device, a "pure construct of Slavic remembrance of the faraway protohomeland," since "it was a most ancient custom for migrants in a regular manner to name rivers, mountains, and settlements in their new dwelling places after the names from their old homeland."[29] According to this view, the geographic terminology of the Croats translocated the terms White Russia (Belorussia) and Red Russia (Chermnaia Rus').[30] Ancient Zarathustra seemed to be living in mnemonic Red Croatia.

Šufflay's spatial concept of history, in which the past generations participated in and were really at one with the present, was easily harmonized with his equally spatially determined concept of East and West, though more so in its Eastern part, which was identified with the eternal countryside. As Šufflay saw it the basic conflict of the twentieth century was the "earthquaking conflict between the East and the West, Europe and Asia, white and yellow civilizations. That conflict [was] being waged at the other end of the earth, on the Pacific Ocean. It [was] being waged over China, that wondrous peasant land, which feeds the quarter of our planet's population."[31] Šufflay's typically Croat dilemma was that he sided with the West, but really sympathized with the East.

28. Milan Šufflay, "Zaratustra u Crvenoj Hrvatskoj," *Zlatni klas*, 1 (1930), no. 1:2–3.

29. Milan Šufflay, "O imenima Hrvat i Srbin: 'Alarodske' teorije dvaju slovenskih učenjaka," *Obzor*, May 15, 1928, p. 2.

30. Milan Šufflay, "Crvena i Bijela Hrvatska," *Obzor*, May 23, 1925, p. 6.

31. [Milan Šufflay], "Na Balkanu i na Tihom Oceanu," *Hrvatsko pravo*, Sept. 12, 1924, p. 1.

The conflict between the East and the West was in its essence the conflict between ethics and technology. The East was meditative and intuitive. Its social unit was the family (or home), its life principle was self-denial and sacrifice for the welfare of the community. The Easterner fought for nonpersonal, racial, and universal aims. He felt himself a part of the universe and would submerge himself in it. The East wanted to "be" and tended toward wisdom and internal peace. On the contrary, the West was tense, vehement, and intellectual ("the white race is a slave to intellect"). Its social unit was the individual, who was moved by egoism. The Westerner fought for personal interests, wanted to "act," and tended toward science and power.[32] The real value of the Western civilization was that it was the bearer of the Roman state type.[33] Unfortunately—and Šufflay was contradictory here—these two civilizations could not be combined; they glared at one another over an abyss:

> The white man discovered the compass, printing, and gunpowder independently of the East. He has reached the hitherto unseen development of technology. He wants to impose his material culture, which was created by his brain, on the East, where intuition prevails. He looks with condescension on the lands of antiquated technology. He sees there only the distaff and the ancient plow, which must be replaced by the machine. He cares not a whit that the harmony between human culture and human nature exists there, that there is no gulf between religion and science. The West has completely forgotten that the ancient and dense East has given the world its only true leaders from times immemorial. Without love for neighbor and deaf to mercy, [the West] has never conceived that it is several thousand years behind the teachings of Christ.[34]

Šufflay's criticism of the West had several components. He was skeptical of the claims of science, which did not bring happiness, but war. He noted that science undoubtedly made men stronger, but not happier. "Nineteenth century, that paradise of scientific madmen, claimed that [happiness] would follow. And this nineteenth century

32. Milan Šufflay, "Britansko carstvo: Djelo Sir Valentine Chirol-a o Indiji," *Obzor,* May 9, 1926, p. 3.

33. [Milan Šufflay], "Svjetske tajne sile," *Hrvatsko pravo,* Sept. 23, 1924, p. 1.

34. (Š.)[Milan Šufflay], "Gandhi i De Valera: (Povodom uapšenja Radićeva)," ibid., Jan. 7, 1925, p. 1.

ended with 1 August 1914." In opposition to the industrial civilization of the West, the East, "especially India and China, are instinctively opposed to [industry]. For those countries cultivated fields are the only true industry."[35] The East did not resist the war-bearing civilization of the West with typically Western violence. Instead, in the face of Mahatma Gandhi, the East responded with nonviolence, boycott, and refusal to have any contact with the Western way of life. Just as in Durban before the First World War, Gandhi "withdrew the people from the cities and industrial companies." The British Raj responded with conciliation, so that by the end of 1925, "India ceased being Sinn Fein."[36]

Despite Šufflay's harsh criticism of Western aggression, his favorable view of Eastern civilization, and benign assessment of Eastern methods of struggle, he was unable to shed a lasting sense of Eastern menace. The "white race" was on the brink of a precipice. The conflict between the East and the West "is characteristic of the whole twentieth century. This conflict is terrible. It will ebb and flow, but will not stop until ultimate ruin. The future of the whole white race is at stake."[37] The feeling of attraction for and the danger from the East, this principal contradiction in Šufflay's *Weltanschauung*, was exacerbated by his further inability to explain why the superior ethical values of the East could not be transferred to the West, this despite his occasional cheer at the positive effects brought by the import of Indian philosophy to the West and his feeling of identity between sedentary Slavdom and China. The solution to this problem must be sought in what Šufflay regarded as the "Eastern part of the white race," in Russia.

Russia was a true biped, which felt at home both in Europe and in Asia. Šufflay agreed with Trubetskoi's Eurasian theory and felt that the Russians were the highest byproduct of both Europe and Asia, the only true Eurasians. Of all the white nations only continental and peasant Russia could understand China in an approximate manner.[38] Moreover, Russia (specifically Soviet Russia) was at work in

35. [Milan Šufflay], "Bertrand Russel," ibid., Sept. 6, 1924, pp. 1–2.
36. Šufflay, "Britansko carstvo," p. 3–4.
37. (Š.)[Milan Šufflay], "Uoči izbora: Ognjeni stup pravaštva," *Hrvatsko pravo*, Feb. 6, 1925, p. 1.
38. [Šufflay], "Na Balkanu,", p. 2.

China and throughout Asia, not with guns, but with spirit. "With its revolution [Russia] drew closer to the concepts of the Asian peoples. . . and is working on the alliance of whole Asia against the Anglo-Saxon race."[39] The Russian Bolsheviks were "supporting and inflaming the resistance of whole Asia against the industry of England and America. This is the nucleus of the Russian movement."[40] The greatest danger for the "Anglo-Saxons would be Asia under the leadership of Russian Eurasiatics."[41]

The problem of Russia was the problem of a mutant. "When Russians like all whites split something, they do not split matter into atoms, but souls into atoms. They want to do with Life the same as the West did with matter. They want to subjugate Life with brain, to create overnight the Life's distant future. They attempted to realize the Communist utopia of brain, but the egg, which builds that brain, refuses to listen. And that is Bolshevism." Still, a further contradiction, "the Bolshevik chaos constitutes the transition from the Russia of grain [Europe] and tea [Asia] to the level of technology and ethos of China and India. Because under the ruin of tsarist Russia of Peter the Great, like wild moss, the green, God-fearing peasant layer is already springing forth. This stratum is quietly, in the Chinese manner, already devouring its Red conquerors, the workers' Bolsheviks, the demons of brain and logic, the former slaves of Western machines, who, having been cut from Mother Earth, attempted to build a castle neither in Heaven nor on the Earth."[42]

To be a Yugoslavist meant to be an enemy of both Croatdom and Serbdom. The prophets of Yugoslavism, men like Steed, Seton-Watson, and Meštrović, treated the Serbs and Croats as if these peoples were experimental rabbits. Seton-Watson, for one, "got it into his head that an ideal state could be built on the cleavage between the East and the West, Europe and the Balkans, Catholicism and Orthodoxy, Tomislav's [Croat] state and [Stefan] Dušan's [Serbian] empire. And he does not intend to give up. Never mind that

39. [Milan Šufflay], "Svetske tajne sile: Na Balkanu i na Tihom Oceanu," ibid., Sept. 23, 1924, p. 1.

40. [Šufflay], "Na Balkanu," ibid., p. 1.

41. (Š.)[Milan Šufflay], "Pacifik i naši pacifiste od Pekinga do Zagreba," ibid., Jan. 3, 1925, p. 2.

42. Milan Šufflay, "Ruska književnost i Anglosasi," *Obzor*, June 6, 1926, p. 4.

the rabbits are wriggling. He wants to cut them alive and create a living monster from two rabbits."[43]

As can be seen, Šufflay's points of tension occur when civilizations attempt to exercise influence on one another. Uneven industrial development of the West effected the aggression against Asia and the resistance of the East. Russia, being a mutant, was innately explosive, but could be pacified by a return to agriculture. In fact, that was Šufflay's recipe for the resolving of all contradictions. His vitalism, the giving in to life activity of otherwordly forces, suggested the reruralization of the planet, the victory of the village, and a gigantic new edition of the medieval world. But if agriculture proffered peace, so did isolation. The most immediate project for isolation could be found in Yugoslavia, where Šufflay traced the conflict between the East and the West in the conflict between the Serbs and the Croats. As a Frankist, he objected to Radić's overtures to the USSR, precisely on the grounds that such a strategy compromised Croatia's Westernism. The ideology of Yugoslavism constituted an attempt to derail the national mnēmē of both the Serbs and Croats, those "two different national souls."

Šufflay's theory of nationhood, his way of looking on history in general, was indulgent of all historically-based imperfections in a typically conservative way. Whereas his strength was in his professional ability to assess the relative strengths of various civilizations, his weakness was in the allegiance that he felt he owed to his civilization and nation. A true leader had to reflect the historical memory of his nation, no matter what that memory actually accumulated over time. To do otherwise meant courting irrelevance. The land and history determined behavior. To think otherwise meant courting disaster. As a result, Šufflay was not and could not be an assimilationist, something that made him a bit of an oddity in the increasingly assimilationist HSP. As an aristocratic pacifist, he was a further oddity in the party that was becoming the breeding ground of the radical Right. One must be on guard against the facile tendencies that would find points of identity between this older nationalist ideology and the integralism of the old and the new Right.

43. (Š.)[Milan Šufflay], "Nadrikipari: Hrvatski narod nije od sadre," *Hrvatsko kolo*, Jan 24, 1925, p. 1.

The Debate about the Problematic Bulgarian: A View on the Pluralism of the National Ideologies in Bulgaria in the Interwar Period

ALEXANDER KIOSSEV

From the point of view of the historian of culture national ideology is an institutionally grounded complex of symbolic practices.[1] It constitutes the sense for national identity of large (in most cases ethnic) groups of people. As an "ideology" in the narrow sense of the word it is a specific form not of "false consciousness," but of "structural limited consciousness."[2] On that surface level it pretends to provide the national community with some typical symbolical patterns: first, steady and eternal national "ideals," "values," "great examples" (which produce a continuity between past and present); second, stable images of the "motherland," the "essence" of the nation, and the permanent features of the "national character" (almost always in contrast with the image of the "Other," the "Foreign," or the "world"); and third, an image of the national (historical, religious, spiritual, cultural, and so forth) "mission." The mutual relation of these prescriptive, descriptive, and "utopian" aspects of the national ideology determines the structure of the typical phenomenological experience of "nationhood" of the nation's

1. The terms "symbolic" and "symbol" are used in the sense in which Cassirer uses them. See Ernst Cassirer, *Philisophie der symbolischen Formen*, Bd. 1–3 (Berlin, 1925–27).

2. See Jameson's commentary on this Althusser idea in Frederic Jameson, *The Political Unconscious* (London, 1981).

average member. In short, on that level the national ideology is a symbolic practice which "celebrates" the stable, homogeneous, and positive identity of the national community.[3]

As a "limited consciousness," however, that surface level of the national ideology makes invisible for an inward point of view some aspects of its real functioning in the socio-historical space and time. On the level of phenomenological experience of nationhood the elements (the symbols) of the national ideology seem to consolidate the people in an immediate and organic "mother-like" *community:* they seem to provide the *steady* ("eternal") standards ("ideals," "values," "examples") for the common life of that community.

But in fact, the nation is not a community, but a *society*—that is to say that it is not based on "immediate," but on alienated social relationships; it is not homogeneous, but heterogeneous—it consists of different classes, strata, groups which are part of this national society not in an organic way but only by means of power-relations, exchange, alienated communication. The steadiness of the national symbols is also apparent: they are in a process of ceaseless synchronical and diachronical dynamics because they are continuously re-interpreted from the point of view of the different (and often conflicting) social groups and generations. Under the surface of apparent steadiness the national past, the ideas of "motherland," national "essence," "character," "mission," and so forth are constantly altered in a pluralistic and controversial way, and every different social group or generation makes attempts to present its own version of the nodal national elements as "universal," valid for the other social groups of the national society as well. All this makes it possible to speak about a *history* of the national ideology—and to present it as a history of explicit or implicit debates, interpretation-conflicts, "discourse competitions," "dialogues," and so forth.

Not only the national past (regarded as a complex of identity-symbols), however, is articulated (constructed, manipulated) by the multiplicity of the social points of view of the national present—the opposite is true as well. The direction of power is not only from the present to the past, but also from the past to the present—because the national present is relatively free to discuss and re-interpret the

3. See Emil Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (London, 1976).

national symbols but not to ignore them in a radical way.[4] It can articulate the problems of its own and perform certain significant social and national activity only by a necessary use of the symbolic alphabet of the national past. The sense of national identity of the present is articulated by one "obligatory" language—the "steady" national symbols, which the national present usually cannot create but only *re-create* in debates and interpretative fights. The debates are not free—they presuppose that *there necessarily exist* common subjects for an argument and struggle: they presuppose the abstract forms of the common "national ideals," common "motherland," "national character," "heroes," "testaments," "mission," and so forth. And the question for the different social groups or generations participating in the national society is only how "truly" to interpret them.[5] The national present depends on the power of the national past because the past is providing it with such presuppositions: speaking phenomenologically the past is opening in the present the horizon of national togetherness—that is, the very "condition of possibility" for the sense of communal identity.

And there is one last theoretical remark. The national past was not a "steady" set of national symbols either—it was also an interpretative fight among different ideas of nationhood. But—as Benjamin pointed out—in the present only one history is officially preserved—the history of the victors.[6] Maintained and reproduced by differ-

4. Of course, radical ignoring of the complex of the national symbols and symbolical practices is possible as well—but this is at the same time a radical destruction of the national ideology in general and therefore goes beyond the limits of the different national phenomena. A good example of such destruction is the "international" proletarian ideology and politics of the Third International.

5. Of course that interpretation is made from the point of view of certain present interests of a concrete social group (in a specific socio-political situation, with certain aims, with the support of concrete institutional means etc.). But in the process of "manipulation" of the past national symbols, the concrete interests, sense of group identity, and interpretation of the present political situation are not altered but something more—only now they are really *articulated*. *It is a mutual process of "economics of forces"*—the past is articulated (selected, accentuated, reinterpreted) by the present but the present receives its real sense only through the articulation of the "languages" of the past. That way the interests of a social group, living in a national society, always transcend the narrow limits of the "real" group—and possess some "universal-national" dimension. All that is not to deny that in some crucial historical situations, when the whole national society is re-established and "re-constituted," new symbols of the national identity are created—but even they are created in an "obligatory" dialogue with the past and the "steady" alphabet of national symbols.

6. Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (New York, 1968).

ent institutions, only the images of nationhood of the dominant social group are "alive" in the public space. The outside limits of the "horizon of togetherness" are pre-determined by this already "naturalized" (in fact—institutionalized) "victor's-ideology"—the victors in the debate of the past exercise an invisible power over the *whole* field of the present debate: they give the common form of the very sense of togetherness. In order to get free from this power the participants in the contemporary debate have to do something very difficult—to revive the forgotten and "dead" voices of the defeated in the previous conflict-debate and so to revive the very open, problematic context of the national debate of the past. And with this, to transform in the most radical way the "sense of togetherness."

Especially interesting in this context of complicated relations between the present and the past is a type of national identity symbols, which are not positive but negative. That means they present the national "essence" or "character" not in positive, but in negative terms and values—more often the terms of accusation, mockery, or irony; they are the "anti-norm" of the national ideology, which, however, is disguised in a descriptive mode.[7] Because of their negative energy they are very difficult to reconcile with positive images of the nation and the national, which are the core of the official and institutionalized national ideology. That preserves them from easy institutionalization and from simplifications (they never become a real and steady part of the "discourse of the victors" and a "good patriotic example" for "the young generations"). But the consequence is not that they are ignored—just the opposite. Because of their challenge and their negative force the interpretative debates and fights around them are extraordinarily hot: different social and generational points of view are trying again and again to cope with their negation, to re-interpret them in a way in which they would no longer be a danger to the national ideology and the positive sense of togetherness.

This study will deal with such a negative national symbol and the history of its interpretations. This is the fictional character Baj Ganjo—a famous case in the history of Bulgarian literature, folk-

7. To put it another way—in such negative national symbols the performative "Don't be such and such" is in a dangerous manner confused with the constative "You are such and such" and this threatens with destruction the positive identification with the national community.

lore, culture, and national ideology. Although the study is about one concrete episode of this history—the debate about "the problematic Bulgarian" in the magazine *Philosophski pregled*—it will try to present briefly and in a general mode the whole history of the many debates and interpretation-fights around Baj Ganjo and some information about the positive background of the Bulgarian national ideology as well.

The National-ideological context

The first forms of Bulgarian ethnic self-consciousness (and first forms of national ideology) are connected with the development of positive symbols of national identity in terms of the opposition "we and the others." This opposition is presented as a moral and religious one: in contrast to the Turks (who are not Christians, who are "cruel tyrants") and to the Greeks (who are educated but are sly and perfidious "fanariots") the Bulgarians are "simple but kindhearted and good." These patterns have to deal with real social, political, and ethnic conflicts in the Balkan area of the Ottoman Empire during the Bulgarian Revival (from about the 1750s to the political independence of Bulgaria and the re-establishment of the Bulgarian state in 1878).[8] They have to transform the negative feelings connected with belonging to the most backward (from the Revival point of view) ethnic group on the Balkan peninsula into positive identification with this group—a typical ideological reversal, which itself has to be a defense against assimilation-attempts and a stimulus for development.

In the late Bulgarian Revival (approximately 1850–1878) another form of the national ideology was developed, which was co-existing with the national identification in terms of contrasts between the moral essences of ethnic groups. It was indirectly connected with the establishment of real Bulgarian cultural institutions (schools, reading rooms, press, independent national church) and with the dream of political freedom in the form of the "ultimate" national institution—the independent Bulgarian state. The national ideology creates a new set of symbols which are corresponding to this dream—they could

8. These symbols of the national ideology were established in the first important text of the Bulgarian Revival—*the History of the Sloveno Bolgarians*, written by the monk Paisii in 1761—and have been repeated and reproduced ceaselessly during the whole Revival.

be called an "ideal state." Against the old kind of identification with the native village, place, town, and so forth (characteristic for the Bulgarian population in the Ottoman empire until the 1850s), the new ideological form demands (and creates) an identification with the whole "native land"—a visionary sacred space surrounded by the emblematic frontier—mountains, rivers, seas. This native land, Bulgaria, is a personified super-value—it is "Mother Bulgaria" and "motherland," who calls and appeals to her son "the Balkan hero" to liberate her from the yoke. There is always a positive historical dimension of this identification—an appeal to the past Bulgarian fame (state, military, and cultural achievements and "great deeds"). In sacred symbols also are transformed the images of some non-existent public and cultural institutions (the royal power, the crown, the flag, the army, and so forth).

After the war between Russia and the Ottoman empire (1877–1878) the "ideal state" is transformed into a real one (although not coinciding with the "sacred space" of the "motherland"). Most of the symbolic institution-identification symbols are established as real state-institutions. These institutions spread and maintained the national symbols of the Revival and the newly established national "mythology" of the heroes of the Bulgarian struggles and rebellions for independence as already official national ideology. Although in different historical periods (1890–1900, 1907–1912, 1923–1925) different small groups of intellectuals develop some oppositional forms of national identification (they regard the "motherland" not as a geo-political, ethnical, and historical reality but as a personal, spiritual, or even mystical and "mythological" experience), the mass culture and the official state cultural policy are dominated by the traditional symbols of national identity, produced during the Revival.[9] As a "discourse of the victors" they are institutionally reproduced as a stable historical axis of Bulgarian ideology and as stable means of attaining national identity for the "man of the people." Although a "high culture" from the point of view of their national and social influence, the intellectual debates about the national identity and

9. For details see Aleksander Kiossev, *"Proleten vjatar" na Nikola Furnadjiev v negovija hudozestven kontekst* (Sofia, 1988), ch. 4.

"the real essence" of native land and national character have almost always had a marginal status.[10]

Textual and Cultural Status of the Symbol "Baj Ganjo"

From the very beginning of its existence the fictional personage Baj Ganjo has a peculiar inter-textual life as he fluctuates across different cultural—oral and written—texts. He is neither steadily bound to a particular narrative, nor to concrete genre or ideological discourse. He can be found in works of the high culture as well as in folklore tales, jokes, and texts of the mass culture; in literary as well as in critical and even in political texts. And of course, that means that his existence is a tension between its problematical identity and its different and controversial interpretations.

He becomes really famous when the Bulgarian writer Aleko Konstantinov transforms him from a personage of a semi-folklore type into a protagonist of his story "Baj Ganjo."[11] The full title of the story is "Baj Ganjo: The Incredible Adventures of one Contemporary Bulgarian" (published in 1894–1895 in the important magazine *Misal*).

At first sight Aleko Konstantinov's story does not pretend to possess great artistic or cultural value—it is a collection of unsophisticated comic short-stories (or feuilletons). It is not easy to retell what the book is about—not only because of the great number of stories, the loose connections between them, and the problematic identity of the main character, Baj Ganjo (who looks sometimes quite different in the different stories). Another reason is the generic indeterminacy of the story. As a cross between folklore, mass culture, and high culture it is a strange conflation of oral jokes about a trickster, fables, concerns about the problem "we and the others," picaresque plot-models; and at the same time it also uses narrative

10. This was particularly clearly manifested during the three wars of Bulgaria (1912–1918) and even recently, during the totalitarian attempts to assimilate the Turks in Bulgaria (1985–1989) and the strong, unofficial Bulgarian nationalist movement after the failure of this attempt (1989–1990). The symbols of the Bulgarian Revival were stable ground for identification and, therefore, for real nationalist political (and even military) activity.

11. Aleko Konstantinov has taken the character from oral jokes recounted in the unofficial intellectual circle, "Merry Bulgaria."

and stylistic devices from the naturalistic social satire and from the French and Russian "physiological" sketch.

In the first part of the book, Baj Ganjo is traveling all over Europe to sell rose-oil (which is itself emblematic, because the rose-oil trade was a traditional Bulgarian connection with the Western world). He gets into different situations, ruled by European cultural conventions (in the opera, in the public bath, in the train, and so forth) and always reveals his oriental inadequacy. Always and everywhere, he acts as an insolent and aggressive egoist with unceremonious bad manners and lack of discretion concerning one's physiological functions. This provokes the bewilderment and the laughter of the Europeans and the shame of an educated Bulgarian, who is always present there (in fact, he is the Narrator). For the latter, the Western world is the symbol of enlightenment, culture, and progress—therefore he is ashamed because Baj Ganjo is absolutely "closed" and unresponsive to Western civilization. Baj Ganjo himself, however, cares neither for the amazement nor for the shame that he provokes, and always "copes" very successfully with the situation.

In the second part of the book, "Baj Ganjo returned from Europe," the character tries (again, very successfully) to hold important social positions in the new Bulgarian state—he is a politician, a journalist, member of a delegation, and so forth. He has lost by now all of his previous "sympathetic" features (he was just funny) and is already a social monster, whose "spirit flies and covers all the public life in Bulgaria." Unlike the "oral" characteristics of the short stories from the first part, here the genre is close to the feuilleton. The triadic personage structure (Baj Ganjo-European-another Bulgarian) disappears and the narrative point of view comes close to an impersonal satiric narrative strategy.

Behind the frivolous stylistics of the feuilleton and the unpretentious directness of the satire, however, what is at stake is the whole symbolic system of the Bulgarian national ideology. For the first time an ironical, unofficial, and semi-folklore image of the Bulgarian penetrates into the official high national culture which is still strongly ruled by already "naturalized" positive ideological images of the Bulgarian nation. The very status of this ironical symbol is also provocative—it is not bound to some prestigious, "high" genre but to a collection of feuilletons and oral "background" from jokes.

Unlike the impersonal national symbols (native land, history, language, political and cultural institutions) and unlike the allegorical or "extraordinary" personifications of the Bulgarian (Mother Bulgaria, the Balkan hero, the heroes and martyrs from the struggles for independence), Baj Ganjo pretends to be an "ordinary" personification of the "man of the people." Konstantinov's book is one of the first attempts to represent from an ironical point of view the psychological and cultural *type* of the common Bulgarian—until then the latter was represented as idealized or integrated in the sacred body of the Bulgarian people.[12]

What is more important, however, is that the plot activity and the speech of Baj Ganjo are almost always an explicit or implicit travesty of the most important national symbols. From the point of view of the character, wherever he goes in Europe he behaves like a *real Bulgarian*—he wears his Bulgarian costume and prefers the Bulgarian cuisine, he keeps proudly mentioning the name "Bulgaria," referring to the "glorious Bulgarian past," to the military exploits of the Bulgarian army, and so forth. From the point of view of the group of intellectual narrators, however, all this turns into its opposite. The proud identification of the character with the national values is interpreted as a mask for his aggressive antisocial attitude, for his reluctance and inability to accept the real European cultural values. His "patriotism" is only an insolent and vulgar way of preserving his quite practical interests and to disguise the lack of real contact with the Western civilization. The ironical narrative reveals the character as *manipulating* the national symbols and from that point of view as their ironical opposition and reversal; Baj Ganjo reveals the "shadow side" of the traditional symbolical patterns of the national ideology. In his behavior the noble moral qualities of the ethnos—the Bulgarian "simplicity," "naturalness," and "kind-heartedness"—are transformed into aggressive anti-cultural attitudes and backwardness. The sacred national values are for Baj Ganjo not a concentration of existential pathos and real identification but tools for cultural isolation from the outside world and for de-

12. In fact, in the book of Konstantinov, as mentioned above, there is a ceaseless tension between the representation of the "typical" and condemnation of the "shameful," between descriptive and normative modes of the narrative, between "representation" and "anti-identification."

fense of his egoistic interests. Unlike the intellectual variants of the national ideology accentuating the European creative potential of the Bulgarian spirit, the typical Bulgarian is represented in Aleko Konstantinov's book as aggressively inimical to civilization and culture. Even the fundamental invariant of the national ideology is reversed. Although there were different forms of the Bulgarian national ideology from the end of the eighteenth until the end of the nineteenth century, their general purpose was one and the same—to transform the shame of being Bulgarian into the pride of calling oneself Bulgarian and of belonging to the national community. The overcoming of the shame and its transformation into pride, self-respect, dignity, cultural significance, and so forth is a constant trend in the Bulgarian national ideology. The "national type" Baj Ganjo reverses that trend. From a semiotic point of view the fictional character (himself a symbol of national identity, a typical Bulgarian) can be regarded as a "textual space" in which other national symbols are travestied.[13] Thus it is itself a negative symbol of national identity—it requires a "shameful" identification with such "typical" Bulgarians. This is, of course, a challenge to the national ideological traditions and gives the fictional character Baj Ganjo great "symbolic efficacy."

All this means that Aleko Konstantinov's book has to be regarded as an "interpretative fight" between the intellectual discourse of the high culture and the discourse of the mass-culture. This "fight" is about the content and value of the experience of nationhood and the sense of the traditional national symbols. Is the experience of nationhood necessarily connected with existential pathos of the identification, with openness to the cultural values of the Western world and inevitable self-critique of Bulgarian backwardness? Or is it, on the contrary, a tool for impenetrability by the foreign, for throwing off all Western culture? Being a tool and not a value in itself, the national ideology, of course, is co-existing perfectly, not with idealism and self-critique, but with egoism and aggressive practical behaviour.

There is a hierarchical relationship between these two points of view in the narrative structure of Aleko Konstantinov's book: the character Baj Ganjo seems to be within the ultimate interpretative

13. See Yuri Lotman, *Tekst v tekste* (Tartu, 1981).

(ironical) power of the narrators and their variant of the national ideology. From this point of view he is the shameful Bulgarian, an example for non-identification. But these hierarchical relations are at the same time unstable—the narrators take part in the plot as other personages and in this position always suffer defeats from their own creature, Baj Ganjo; Baj Ganjo is himself interpretatively active and on many occasions he drastically defines the national idealism of the narrators as "idle talk." The narrative position in itself is not very stable; in fact, there is not only a multitude of narrators but also different strategies and generic modes of narration. All this provides the text of Aleko Konstantinov "with the means for its own deconstruction"—that is to say, with the means of destroying its own ideological-interpretative patterns and of providing a potential autonomy of the character Baj Ganjo. Free from the interpretative ironical pattern of the narration, he can pretend to be the *real* and *typical* Bulgarian.[14]

Such deconstruction was possible for another reason as well: the argument between the very same variants of the national ideology was, in the 1890s and later, a part not only of the text of Konstantinov's book, but also of its broad social, cultural, and linguistic context. The high culture of the intelligentsia (turned to the Western world) and the mass culture of some economically active layers of the Bulgarian society (which did not need urgently a Western cultural horizon, but did strongly need a defense of their own identity confronted with the cultural invasion of "the foreign") were in ceaseless "interpretative fights" concerning the national symbols and "ideals."

The Fate of the Book and the Fate of the Character: Debates Concerning Baj Ganjo

In 1947 in a bibliographical collection published under the symptomatic title *The Most Popular Bulgarian Book*, it was pointed out that to that moment the book had undergone twenty-seven editions and eight editions for children.[15] Now, at the end of the 1980s, the editions are already numbering sixty-six: a total of 2,295,700 copies

14. This expression is borrowed from Paul de Man.

15. Todor Borov, ed., *Naj-populjarnata balgarska kniga* (Sofia, 1947).

in print. The book has been translated over forty times in more than thirty different languages. Besides, the character has become more famous than the book. He left the pages long ago and has turned into a common byword for Bulgarian. He has undergone a secondary folklorization and even now in Bulgaria he is a character in a great number of anecdotes. A lot of writers after Aleko Konstantinov tried to write stories about "Baj Ganjo now," about "The new adventures of Baj Ganjo," and the like.

That is to say that the character has penetrated all layers of Bulgarian culture and, what is more, he has turned into phraseological common form in the everyday Bulgarian language. He functioned and functions now as a national ideologeme—as an ambivalent symbol of national identity with a large range of influence and almost a century-old existence in the Bulgarian culture.

As may be expected, the reaction of the critics was especially strong. The provocativeness of Baj Ganjo has generated a number of vehement discussions of Aleko Konstantinov's book and the character. The critical debates on Baj Ganjo have not abated in Bulgaria since 1895—there have been written over five hundred publications dealing with the book or the character. Many of the outstanding Bulgarian critics and cultural figures have interpreted the "Baj Ganjo" phenomenon. Their interpretations are often characterized by hidden or open attempts to deprive this provocative "shameful" national symbol of its symbolic efficacy—that is to say, of its ability to create a "typical" image of the Bulgarian and an unpleasant identification with this "type." In the period between the 1890s and the 1920s the following intellectuals wrote about Baj Ganjo: Krastju Krastev, Pencho Slaveikov, Dimitar Blagoev, Benjo Tsonev, Ivan Shishmanov, Bojan Penev, Mihail Arnaudov, and so forth.[16] Their interpretative positions and vocabularies vary, but nevertheless there are some symptomatic points of agreement in their interpretations:

16. Krastju Krastev, *Aleko Konstantinov: Shest Studii* (Sofia, 1917); Pencho Slaveikov, "Aleko Konstantinov", *Misal* 5–6 (1901); Dmitar Blagoev, "Baj Ganjo—predvestnik na oformenite dnes geroi na kapitalisma," *Novo vreme* 1 (1897); Benjo Tsonev, "Predgovor kam sachinenijata na Aleko Konstantinov," in Aleko Konstantinov, *Sachinenija* (Sofia, 1903); Ivan Shishmanov, "Aleko Konstantinov ot edno novo gledishte," *Uchilichten pregled* 8 (1927); Bojan Penev, "Kak vaznika obraza na Baj Ganjo," in *Iskra* (Sofia, 1923), "Prevaplashtenijata na Baj Ganjo," *Zlatorog* 1 (1923); Mihail Arnaudov, "Aleko Konstantinov i Baj Ganjo," *Bulgarska misal* 6 (1934).

First, Baj Ganjo is a social, rather than a national, type. He represents the 'bourgeois" in the period of primary accumulation of capital;

Second, Baj Ganjo is not a national type, because he is not a type at all. Both the book and its central character are poor artistic achievements. The character of Baj Ganjo is psychologically improbable—it is an impossible combination of human shortcomings;

Third, Baj Ganjo combines psychological features that are not specifically Bulgarian but features characteristic of all uncivilized nations in general;

Fourth, Baj Ganjo lacks depth and insight: the soul of the Bulgarian hides secrets and riches, which Aleko Konstantinov could not see because of the feuilleton-like method of his writing.

As one can see, the main target of the interpretative "deconstruction" is the idea of the national representative "typicality" of the character (he is not a *type*, he is not a *Bulgarian* type, the *truly Bulgarian* type is *different*). Nevertheless the symbolic efficacy of the character Baj Ganjo is so strong that the critical texts of every one of the mentioned intellectuals presupposes in one way or another that *there is* something national and representative in the character. The very pathos of the unexpected critical response (for an unpretentious book of feuilletons) is symptomatic: the attempts for distinction of Baj Ganjo are signs of the power of the hidden identification. The best example is a strange sentence from Dr. Krastju Krastev: "Baj Ganjo is not a national type, he is a national shame."

While intellectuals and men of letters argued so vehemently, the character assumed a life on his own among an audience which sometimes had not even read Aleko Konstantinov's book. The Bulgarian masses started using the name of Baj Ganjo as a positive symbol of the Bulgarian. Anecdotes about him and his ability to cope with every situation were created. In these oral jokes with semi-folklore-semi-mass-culture status, Baj Ganjo always comes out on top, when in conflict or competition with "an Englishman," "a Frenchman," or "an American." He always demonstrates his remarkable sexual, physical, or military power. This way of "popular deconstruction" of Aleko Konstantinov's text consists of a total ignorance of the ironical perspective which was constitutive of the personage in the book. Baj Ganjo is interpreted not only as a national type, but as a *positive*

one: the shame is transformed back into pride. All that made prominent Bulgarian intellectuals accuse the masses of lacking culture and being as unresponsive to the influence of the European civilization as Baj Ganjo himself: "The Bulgarian recognized himself in Baj Ganjo and he liked himself," Bojan Penev wrote in 1923.

Geseman's Article and the Debate about "The Problematic Bulgarian."

It is this kind of context that provided the background for the article by the outstanding German Slavic scholar Gerhard Geseman called "The Problematic Bulgarian," devoted to the "Baj Ganjo" phenomenon and published in the leading German Slavonic magazine *Slawische Rundschau* in 1931.[17] Gerhard Geseman was prompted by the essay of the Bulgarian writer Konstantin Petkanov,[18] entitled "Characteristic Features of the Bulgarian" (as pointed out at that time by the editors of the magazine, K. Petkanov intended that "Bulgarian" stand for the "Bulgarian peasant," who was the "natural" representative of the Bulgarian people). The psychological world of the Bulgarian described by K. Petkanov is quite "monistic"—its pivotal point is the Bulgarian's relation to the land. It is the main source of his living, the basis of his everyday agricultural occupations; therefore it determines everything in his life: his attitude to society, to religion, to death, to "nationhood." Death is for him "the call of the earth"; because of his permanent connections with the cosmic elements, his relation to the transcendental realm is rather more mythology and superstition than genuine Christian belief. The passion for the land develops in him, on the one hand, a peculiar relation to agricultural labor (it is not an activity with practical interests, but a "creative act")—on the other hand, however, it turns him into an anti-social individualist, makes him part of nature and the elements. The land as central value can alienate him from everything else—from family and relatives, from nation and language.

In his essay Petkanov insists that the real Bulgarian is different from Baj Ganjo: "Since we have overcome the Turkish yoke, we as a nation stand above the rough, awkward, jovial, and good-humored

17. Gerhard Geseman, "Der problematische Bulgare," *Slawische Rundschau* 3 (1931).

18. Konstantin Petkanov, "Harakterni cherti na bulgarina," *Philosophski pregled* (1930), p. 353.

Baj Ganjo," he wrote. And he opposed to that feuilleton character the Bulgarian as almost mythological creature of the earth.

In "The Problematic Bulgarian," Geseman neglects this assertion as well as the whole positive "mythology" of the "relation to the earth." Unexpectedly for the traditional Bulgarian interpretation of the fictional character, he claims that the survival of the Bulgarian through centuries under the foreign yoke is due precisely to Baj Ganjo. According to the German professor it is the design and the unsusceptibility to foreign influences (the profound connection to the native and the rejection of all that is alien) which is characteristic of Baj Ganjo. And Baj Ganjo's resistance makes possible Bulgarians' survival as a nationality. In the historical course this survival develops certain "unattractive" (a-moral, a-social, and a-cultural) features. But in fact Baj Ganjo (the type of the survival) is "beyond good and evil"—he performed an important "biological" function in the preservation of his clan. He preserved Bulgarian vitality and carried on a historical mission as "the Balkan opportunist and vital type": "It was exactly on Baj Ganjo's back that the centuries of slavery skimmed without reducing his vitality," Geseman wrote. Baj Ganjo fulfilled his genuine historical task—the preservation of the Bulgarian spirit—during the national Revival; later, in the period of creation of the modern and Europeanized Bulgarian state, he gradually disappears from the historical scene. The servile remnants in Baj Ganjo's persona are, in these later years, objectively harmful for the development of the Bulgarian nation, culture, and state.

Geseman points out that the Bulgarian should not feel ashamed of the Baj Ganjo type—just as the Czech should not be ashamed of Švejk. In true works of art such national types turn into universal symbols (Don Quixote, Chichicov, Dickens's characters). Baj Ganjo has not turned into such a symbol because Konstantinov's book lacks artistic quality, and he did an objective injustice in his treatment of Baj Ganjo—he did not choose the right historical time and the right historical circumstances in which this important Bulgarian type is to be depicted. He should have been depicted not in opposition to civilized Europe (where he is ridiculous and shameful), but in a situation in which he performed his "biological" and historical function in the preservation of the nation. He could be depicted also in the period when he was already really and objectively harmful—in opposition

to the new Bulgarian culture and state, when his previous characteristics, which helped him to accommodate under the yoke, turn into destructive and uncivilized ones. The reason for this mistake (in Geseman's opinion) lies in the fact that Konstantinov himself was a representative of the quite young Bulgarian intelligentsia, which admired the ambivalent European civilization too much and wanted to emancipate itself from the "biological" characteristics of the nation too soon.

Geseman's interpretation of Baj Ganjo has a peculiar status. Although sharing the traditional view of the Bulgarian criticism about the mimetic and "typical" nature of the character, he changes radically the traditional interpretation of Baj Ganjo, giving an unexpected *historical* perspective to this interpretation of Baj Ganjo—that is, he changes the temporal context in which the character was originally placed and this, of course, changes the meaning, the social and national value of Baj Ganjo. He ceases being a parasite and receives a historical mission.

Regarding the European civilization as "ambivalent" and "doubtful," Geseman changes the traditional cultural opposition of the high value of the foreign (the European) and the poor cultural value of the native (the Bulgarian). The "unresponsiveness" to European high culture ceases to be an indisputably negative value.

The result is that Geseman ignores completely the network of intellectual and moral criteria by which Aleko Konstantinov's narrative evaluates the character (these criteria presuppose the ideologeme of "Europeanization" of Bulgaria). The "type" and the actor of the Bulgarian survival (which is a value in itself, regardless of the problematic and ambivalent "Europeanization") is "beyond good and evil." He can be evaluated only by the criterion of his *national* historical mission and function, which is different in the different periods of Bulgarian history. In some of these periods he is useful, in others—he is "unattractive" and "harmful."

It seems that Geseman has also made another important change in the symbolic efficacy of the character, which was beyond the ability of the Bulgarian interpretations. Because of his foreign point of view, he was able to transform the "shameful *identification*" into—as the critic Georgi Konstantinov pointed out—"well-balanced historical *explanation*." As a foreign scholar he is able to judge the

"Baj Ganjo type" without Bulgarian "emotions"—objectively and impartially, as a necessary historical phenomenon. Unlike Georgi Konstantinov and his contemporaries, however, Geseman reads the Bulgarian "survival type" as an allegory of the "biological power of national survival" in general. His interpretation and explanation are grounded in the ideas of the "biological force," "national destiny," and "historical mission"; that is, they are grounded in the core of a nascent German (and not only German) national ideology in which "the nation," its "destiny," "survival," and "mission" are "beyond good and evil." That is not to say that he shares all the terrible racial ideas of German nationalism and fascism—he is much more connected with ideologies of the nineteenth century: a mixture of Nietzsche, philosophy of life, Social Darwinism, and positivist cultural history.[19] But nevertheless his reading is not "objective" and plainly explanatory; it also presupposes a "Great Narrative" and an ideological procedure, concealed behind the neutral discourse of the explanation—an identification with the strange (biological? mystical?) power of the national survival.[20]

Geseman's interpretation of Baj Ganjo was a stimulus and, at the same time, a challenge for Bulgarian intellectuals. First, it was an interpretation from the point of view of a foreign cultural authority—up to that point not one of the foreign scholars concerned with Bulgarian literature, culture, and history had really understood the great and provocative importance of the strange creature Baj Ganjo for the Bulgarian identity. Also relevant was the fact that it was an interpretation from a German point of view. Because of its geo-political situation Bulgaria was always at the crossroads for the interests and cultural influences of two great powers—Russia and Germany. After World War I, in which Bulgaria was in the Central Forces Alliance, there were important parallels and correspondences between the "national destinies" of the two defeated states, which gradu-

19. A sign of the distance which separates Geseman from this kind of nationalism is that he does not develop Konstantin Petkanov's fascination of "the call of earth in the Bulgarian heart" in the direction of the "Blut und Boden" ideology, which was so prominent and important in Germany at the time.

20. The metaphor "Great Narrative" is used here in Lyotard's sense—as a self-evident ideological construct, which legitimizes the power of certain social institutions and discourses: a legitimizing "myth." See Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition* (Minneapolis, 1984).

ally intensified their political and cultural relations. Therefore the importance and influence of the German national and cultural example was gradually growing in Bulgaria. And although Bulgarian nationalism was never so radical, mystic, and aggressive, yet some German national ideas had found considerable response in Bulgaria. That was the case with the German idea of the tragic and heroic national destiny (supported of course by the fact of Bulgarian history itself), the German idea of the crisis of democratic values and the need for a "strong national state" and its requisite "strong individuals" and "leaders"; even some explicit racial and fascist ideas found some response in Bulgaria. More important than these racial and fascist exceptions was the common patriotic mood and the identification with the nation as a historical agent of its own "survival," of its "struggle for unfulfilled ideals," and of its "mission." The use and re-appropriation of some general German cultural and ideological models enabled seeing in a German re-interpretation of the "shameful" Bulgarian symbol an issue of great national importance. It could be an occasion for revision of important points in the national ideology—the image of the Bulgarian, the historical meaning of the "national destiny," the function of the intelligentsia, and so forth.

But at the same time Geseman's interpretation conflicts seriously with one very important and historically almost permanent feature of the Bulgarian national ideology—the high evaluation of European culture and the efforts to "Europeanize" Bulgaria. The idea that Bulgarian survival is "beyond culture" (beyond its ambivalent values, its "good and evil") is scarcely acceptable in Bulgaria—especially among the intellectuals and the creators of "national pride."

This means that the possible response to Geseman's article would necessarily be ambivalent and controversial—unlike the German professor, the Bulgarian critics and intellectuals were not free from the ideological and cultural *history* of Baj Ganjo interpretations (*die Rezeption-und Wirkungsgeschichte*). Each of the Bulgarian participants in the debate over Geseman's article has a rather determined and complex opinion about what Baj Ganjo is: each of them has already formed a certain cultural and national identification—and dis-identification—attitude toward the Baj Ganjo phenomenon. Consequently there are clear traces of traditional interpretations, "deconstructions," and traditional national ideologemes in their response to

Geseman's article. Nevertheless the new and surprising viewpoint of the German scholar was a challenge, which made it possible to go sometimes beyond the limits of the traditional Bulgarian interpretations and to reveal new valences of the symbol in connection (or contrast) with Geseman's interpretation. The provocative opinion of the foreigner triggered re-interpretations of Baj Ganjo, whose real cause was the new tendencies in the development of the Bulgarian national ideology in the thirties. Thus in the reaction of Petkanov, Tsanev, Konstantinov, and Michalchev there is a complex mixture of traditional and new, foreign and native ideological schemes—born out of the international and Bulgarian situations and the peculiar position of the Bulgarian intelligentsia at the end of the twenties and the beginning of the thirties.

Georgi Konstantinov is relatively traditional. On the rhetorical surface of his article he welcomed Geseman's original and "historically calm" explanation of Baj Ganjo as a proof that the Bulgarian shame over Baj Ganjo is not necessary. In supporting Geseman's opinion, however, he is repeating the old argument that the character is not a shameful national type because it is not a type at all (a poor artistic achievement, a mechanical sum of negative features with a lack of psychological credibility, a sum of features characteristic of other uncivilized nations as well, and so forth.) Whereas Geseman transforms the symbol by changing its historical context and the moral co-ordinate system in which it is placed, Georgi Konstantinov tries (in a traditional Bulgarian manner of criticism) to disintegrate it and to destroy its symbolic efficacy.

The reaction of the writer Petkanov to Geseman's article is far more ingenious; at the same time it is also more typologically similar to the "modern" variants of the national ideologies in Europe during the thirties. Petkanov's response can be found in the second part of his article "Characteristic Features of the Bulgarian": the first one dealt with the Bulgarian "essence," the second with the Bulgarian "mask." Petkanov accepts and even hyperbolizes the idea that Baj Ganjo is the surviving "force" of the nation. But the features of Baj Ganjo which were "unattractive" for Geseman in the context of the new Bulgarian nation and state (his closedness and suspiciousness, his roughness, egoism, and oriental manners) possess in Petkanov's view a quite different meaning. They are "the armor of the Bulgarian

spirit," the apparent face which is turned not against his Oriental, but against his Occidental foes (in Petkanov's interpretation "foreign" means always the Western world). According to Petkanov the Bulgarian has the moral and historical right to manifest his distrustful Baj Ganjo-like mask to the foreigners and Europe, since it was the Great and "civilized" European powers that caused such harm to his motherland. In order to make a more profound characterization of the Bulgarian, one should see through this mask: the true and deep spirituality of the Bulgarian manifests itself in his style of living (implicitly—of country-living), in his peasant traditions and his folklore. It is in these inherent national forms of life and not in his problematic relations with foreigners that the Bulgarian reveals examples of genuine moral behavior and spiritual experience, which have nothing to do with Baj Ganjo. Baj Ganjo is merely an attempt to conceal the purity of the Bulgarian soul from the stranger's eyes. The new time that Bulgaria enters creates the necessity to break out of the traditional distrustful and servile Baj Ganjo's shell and to develop freely those hidden and deep creative energies which were preserved in the Bulgarian soul for centuries.

As one can see, the transformations of the traditional "shameful" symbol are quite serious. According to Petkanov, Geseman has repeated the mistake of Aleko Konstantinov: he has misunderstood the Bulgarian, taking his Baj Ganjo-like mask as his essence. The "true" Baj Ganjo (the Bulgarian soul) is turned to himself, to his authentic native culture and to the "call of the earth"—not to Europe. All the negative features in Baj Ganjo are not really negative because they are not backwardness and lack of civilization: they are just an "armor"—a conscious simulation and expression of legitimate mistrust of the "civilized" Europe. Geseman has considered the "historical mission" of Baj Ganjo in the context of the slavery and the Revival, as a survival energy against the hostile Balkan and Oriental world. In changing the hostile context from an Oriental to an Occidental one, Petkanov invisibly changes the temporal context of the symbol as well: the real harm caused Bulgaria by the European Great Powers (which could legitimize the Bulgarian mistrust) is connected with the treaties after the Russian-Turkish War in 1878 and after the First World War in 1919. Petkanov's interpretation of Baj Ganjo implies that the "Bulgarian mask" has succeeded in mis-

leading the interpretative efforts of such foreigners as Geseman and the others and the Western-oriented Bulgarian intelligentsia of Aleko Konstantinov and the like, for whom this was a failure to fulfill its national mission—the expression of truly national values and the immanence of the Bulgarian soul.[21]

But while arguing with the interpretation of the "foreigner" Geseman, Petkanov nevertheless unconsciously shares with him some ideological presuppositions. He thinks about the national soul in metaphysical terms (appearance, essence), in providential perspective (destiny, mission, self-expression); he shares also the devaluation of the "ambivalent" foreign European civilization and the transformation of the nation into a value in itself. He is even more "modern" and similar to the nationalist ideologies of the thirties in comparison with Geseman: the lumping together of "Bulgarian" and "peasant," the organic "earth" mythology typologically connects him with such phenomena as the German "*Blut-und-Boden Literatur,*" the Czech "ruralism," the English "Georgianism," and so forth.

The responses of the two other members of the debate—Georgi Tsanev and Dimitar Mihalchev—are completely different. The literary critic Georgi Tsanev puts to rationalistic critique the very possibility of a certain definite national characterization. He is the strongest in his disagreement with Geseman's interpretation, beginning with the very methodology of the German professor. According to Tsanev, "The complete national type is a complete abstraction"—it is infinitely poorer in quality, compared with considerable regional, social and individual differences among people. Besides, nations change in the course of their historical development and thus appear new psychological types. Baj Ganjo is not representative of that which is stable in the Bulgarian national life—he is much more a product of such political and historical moments in the history of Bulgaria: he is a social rather than a national type. He is a representative of the anti-social and de-classed elements in a certain transitory socio-historical stage in the development of Bulgarian society. He is not the image of the Bulgarian in general, but of the Bulgarian who is "spoiled" by his participation in the vulgar political struggles of the country.

21. See in this connection the later article of Konstantin Petkanov, "Bulgarskata intelligentsia kato rozba i otricanie na bulgarskoto selo," *Philosophski pregled* (1932).

Tsanev is thinking about nation in historical and sociological terms, rather than in metaphysical and providential ones: there is no stable "essence," "character," and "mission" in his explanation. He rejects all the interpretative transformations made by Geseman. The temporal context in which Baj Ganjo is placed by his author must not be changed, for the character is a product of Aleko Konstantinov's present, not of the past and the Turkish domination. Tsanev restores in a similar way the value dimension of the cultural opposition "foreign (European)-native (Bulgarian)": the lack of culture and civilization cannot be positive under any circumstances. The change of the moral co-ordinate system and the reversal of the value of the character in general are rejected by Tsanev as well. According to him it is wrong to extract such features of a character as his vitality, for example, and then to define that character as positive on that basis. Baj Ganjo is what he is because of his negative characteristics—the negative is the essential nucleus of the character and no interpretative manipulation can obliterate it. Although Tsanev is destroying the whole "nation-in-itself" ideology, one can suspect that his opposition to Geseman's interpretation is not a "pure" example of "*Ideologiekritik*" but possesses an ideological background of its own (though a very different one). It is in the tradition of the Bulgarian Marxist interpretations of Baj Ganjo (the character is a social type—the young Bulgarian "bourgeois" in the period of the primary accumulation of capital). It also coincides with the direction of the national politics of the Communist International after the Vienna congress of 1926—a program for international struggle of the proletariat against "bourgeois nationalism."

A "purer" and more destructive example of "Ideologiekritik" are the final remarks of the editor D. Mihalchev, who reveals some of the inherent contradictions in Geseman's and Georgi Konstantinov's interpretations. Geseman's "substantial" image of Baj Ganjo as a permanent and integral type is a fiction: the character represents a complex of features, which is not permanent and integral in its historical durability. But the lack of integrity cannot be used as an accusation of poor artistic value in the character—life and the real human type in Bulgaria themselves are not integral either. The "biological" and "accommodation" metaphors are misleading as well: the nation and the representative national type are not biological, but histori-

cal and sociological phenomena. The idea of the "accommodational mission" of Baj Ganjo lacks an explanatory force—it cannot really explain the character's ignorance and his lack of culture.

Every one of the Bulgarian commentators on Geseman's article can be seen as representative of one of the different possible positions of the Bulgarian intellectual in general. Georgi Konstantinov defends the traditional values of the Bulgarian high culture and an old (but alive) model of national identity. Konstantin Petkanov is closest to the organic and mythological variants of national ideology, characteristic of the twenties and thirties. Georgi Tsanev represents a possible Marxist position on the symbolic system of the national ideology, and Mihalchev expresses radical scepticism. If one continues this generalization (and of course simplification as well) of the possible positions toward Geseman's interpretation and toward the Baj Ganjo phenomenon itself, one can see the implicit background of an important ideological struggle. It is a struggle between "mythological" and "analytical" discourses, articulating such ideas as "nation," "national type (character)," "national history (destiny, mission)." The first one is articulating these ideas in terms of substance, essence, and the like and transforms them into monolithic entities and pre-determined processes. The second one is trying to dissolve them in a complicated and sometimes contradictory network of social and historical phenomena and thus carries some inherent possibilities for "Ideologiekritik."

Macedonianism and Macedonian Nationalism on the Left

ANDREW ROSSOS

The inter-war years represented, to use Ivan Katardžiev's well chosen phrase, "a time for maturing" in the development of Macedonian national consciousness and the formation of the Macedonian national identity.[1] During this short time span of two decades, the major trends in the evolution of Macedonian nationalism in the previous century—Slavism, the Macedonianism and Macedono-Bulgarianism of the small intelligentsia, and the Macedonianism (našism) of the masses—coalesced in a clearly articulated and unambiguous Macedonianism and Macedonian nationalism on the left. In the history of the Macedonian people, i.e., the Slav-speaking majority of Macedonia,[2] this marked the culmination of a long, complicated, but continuous process of national development and affirmation.[3]

The "thorny" and "perennial" Macedonian problem had been permanently on the agenda of the Great Powers since the Congress of Berlin in 1878; it had become the central issue, "the apple of discord," dividing the Balkan nations, and "the stumbling block" to Balkan unity at least since the aftermath of the Crimean War.[4] For

1. I. Katardžiev, *Vreme na zreenje: Makedonskoto nacionalno prašanje megju dvete svetski vojni, 1919–1930* (Skopje, 1977), 2 vols. The title of this work.

2. On the politics of Macedonian geography see H. R. Wilkinson, *Maps and Politics: A Review of the Ethnographic Cartography of Macedonia* (Liverpool, 1951).

3. See B. Ristovski, "Što e taa makedonska prerodba (Prilog kon periodizacijata na makedonskiot nacionalen razvitok" in B. Ristovski, *Makedonskiot narod i makedonskata nacija* (Skopje, 1973), 2 vols., I, 163–183. (Hereafter cited as Makedonskata nacija). B. Ristovski is the leading authority on Macedonian national thought and development. The two volumes contain previously published studies on the subject. For the original place and date of publication of these writings see II, 663–68. See also K. Veselinov, *Vŭzrazhdaneto na Makedoniia i Ilindenskoto vŭstanie* (Sofia, 1939).

4. L. S. Stavrianos, *Balkan Federation: A History of the Movement Toward Balkan Unity in Modern Times* (Northampton, Mass., 1944), is still the most valuable survey on the impact

the Great Powers it was primarily a European problem; for them it concerned the fate of the Ottoman Empire in Europe, its status as a power, and thus the balance of power in Europe. Their policies on the Macedonian problem thus depended on their attitudes toward the Ottoman Empire, and by the 1870s these were being influenced by their relations with Macedonia's neighbours, the newly created Balkan national states—Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria.[5]

The ruling elites in Athens, Belgrade, and Sofia, on the other hand, each chose to consider the Macedonian question as "its own," claiming the Macedonians for its own nation and nation state on the basis of often contradictory historic, ethnic, linguistic, religious, or other data.[6] Their activities in Macedonia, primarily religious and educational at the outset, were intensified after the Crimean War, which raised once again the Eastern Question and the future of the "Sick Man" of Europe. In order to prepare bases for the future partition of the Ottoman Empire, now considered unavoidable, the Balkan nations began to organize and to work more systematically in the areas of the Empire populated by Orthodox Christians, the center of which was Macedonia. The Greek presence had been well established there for a long time by the Greek-dominated "Patriarchist" Church; and was now being challenged by the initial but rather vacillating moves of Serbia, and in a much more determined fashion by the Bulgarian national movement, which was fast gaining confidence and influence at home and abroad.[7]

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of the Macedonian question on inter-Balkan relations. See also M. Minoski, *Federativnata ideja vo makedonskata politička misla, 1887–1919* (Skopje, 1985); L. Ormandzhiev, *Federatsia na balkanskite narodi: Idei i prechki* (Sofia, 1947); K. I. Kabakchiev, *Kŭm balkanskata federatsia* (Sofia, 1914).

5. There is no adequate comprehensive study of the policies of the Great Powers on the Macedonian question. See M. S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question, 1774–1923* (London, 1966), chs. 7–10; W.L. Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments, 1871–1890* (New York, 1931), ch. 10; and the appropriate sections in G. P. Genov, *Iztochniiat vŭpros* (Sofia, 1925–1926), 2 vols.; M. Laskaris, *To anatolikon zitima, 1800–1923* (Thessaloniki, 1948–54), 2 vols.; V. Popović, *Istočno pitanje* (Belgrade, 1928).

6. The Bulgarian, Greek, and Serbian claims were extensively publicized. For a representative sampling of the divergent points of view see T. R. Georgevich, *Macedonia* (London, 1918) (Serbian); I. Ivanov, *La question macédoine* (Paris, 1920) (Bulgarian); C. Nicolaides, *La Macédoine* (Berlin, 1899) (Greek).

7. Ristovski, *Makedonskata nacija*, p. 177; K. Džambazovski, *Kulturno-opštestvenite vrski na makedoncite so Srbija vo tekot na XIX vek* (Skopje 1969), pp. 57–141; Lj. Doklestić, *Srpsko-makedonskite odnosi vo XIX-ot vek* (Skopje, 1973), p. 93; B. Koneski, *Kon makedonskata prerodba: Makedonskite učebnici od 19 vek* (Skopje, 1959), p. 10–18.

The establishment of the Exarchate as a Bulgarian national church in 1870 represented the most notable triumph of the Bulgarian national movement until then; and, in the context of the theocratic Ottoman Empire, the best possible instrument for the spread of Bulgarian influence in its remaining Slav areas—in Bulgaria and Macedonia. In effect, it constituted another Orthodox *millet* in the Ottoman Empire—a Slav Orthodox *millet*, controlled by the Bulgarians—in addition to the already established (Greek) Orthodox *millet* headed by the Patriarchist Church. The Bulgarian position in Macedonia was enhanced even further after 1878, when the newly created Bulgarian state, the Principality of Bulgaria, placed its power and resources at the disposal of the national church in its struggle with the Greeks.[8]

Hence, by the 1880s a three-way struggle for Macedonia already was in process: the antagonists sought to win control of the spiritual and cultural life in Macedonia through the domination of the local churches, which in turn controlled the local schools and communal organizations. At the outset they carried out the struggle by means of propaganda, the use of threats and enormous financial expenditures. As time went on, however, and especially after the Macedonian (Ilinden) uprising of 1903, they resorted to the use of armed force. The aim of the three antagonists was the same: to browbeat each other and each other's "parties" in Macedonia, and to win the hearts and minds of the Macedonians, or rather to terrorize the latter into submission.[9] Their ultimate aim, however, was either to prepare the

8. Doklestić, *Srpsko-makedonskite odnosi*, pp. 133–172; and especially F. Adanir, *Die Makedonische Frage: Ihre Entstehung und Entwicklung bis 1908* (Wiesbaden, 1979), pp. 42–72. See also M. Arnaudov, *Ekzarkh Iosif i bŭlgarskata kulturna borba sled sŭzdavaneto na Ekzarkhiata* (Sofia, 1933); Kiril Patriarkh Bŭlgarski, *Bŭlgarskata Ekzarkhiia v Makedoniia i Odrinsko* Vol. I in 2, (Sofia, 1969); and I. Vanchev, *Novo-bŭlgarskata prosveta v Makedoniia prez vŭzrazhdaneto (do 1878 godina)* (Sofia, 1982), pp. 53–131.

9. The literature on the struggle in Macedonia is vast, but rather uneven and polemical in nature. A good documentary survey in English of the activities of the neighbouring Balkan states in Macedonia is to be found in G.P. Gooch and M. Temperley, eds., *British Documents on the Origins of the War 1898–1914*. 11 volumes. (London, 1926–1938), vol. 5, pp. 100–23. For the most balanced treatment in a western language see F. Adanir, ibid.; other useful works in western languages are H. N. Brailsford, *Macedonia: Its Races and their Future* (London, 1906); W. Jacob, *Die Makedonische Frage* (Berlin, 1931); J. Ancel, *La Macédoine* (Paris, 1930); E. Barker, *Macedonia: Its Place in Balkan Power Politics* (London, 1950).

For a representative sampling of the divergent points of view of the three claimants to Macedonia see J.M. Jovanović, *Južna Srbija od kraia xviii veka do osvobodjenja* (Belgrade, 1941)

ground for the annexation of the entire land, which was the objective of Bulgaria, or for its partition which, as time went on, came to represent an acceptable solution for Greece and Serbia.[10]

The Balkan Wars, and particularly the Inter-allied or Second Balkan War, marked the high point in the long struggle for Macedonia on the part of the neighboring kingdoms and a turning point in the history of Macedonia and the Macedonians. As a result of that war the territorial integrity of Macedonia, which comprised a natural economic and, in the main, an ethno-cultural unity, was violated for the first time since the era of the warring dynastic states in the medieval Balkans.[11] Macedonia was partitioned by force of arms, in a war between the claimants to Macedonia: Bulgaria, on the one hand, and allied Greece and Serbia, on the other. Greece acquired Aegean Macedonia, the largest Macedonian territory; and Serbia got Vardar Macedonia, with the largest Slavic Macedonian population. Defeated in the war, the Bulgarians, whose influence in Macedonia had grown steadily since 1870 and who were obsessed with the idea of annexing all Macedonia and thus creating a great San Stefano Bulgaria, ended up with the smallest part, Pirin Macedonia. This partition was sanctioned by the Peace Treaty of Bucharest of August 10, 1913, and confirmed, with some minor modifications at the expense of Bulgaria, by the peace treaties ending the First World War.[12]

For the small Macedonian intelligentsia and, as time went on, for the Macedonian people in general, the Macedonian question was exclusively their own. It concerned the future of their land, Mace-

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(Serbian); G. Bazhdarov, *Makedonskiat vŭpros vchera i dnes* (Sofia, 1925) (Bulgarian); G. O. Modi, *O makedonikos agon kai i neoteri makedoniki istoria* (Thessaloniki, 1967) (Greek).

Macedonian and other Yugoslav historians turned their attention to this problem more recently. See Džambazovski, *Kulturno-opštestvenite;* Doklestić, *Srpsko-makedonskite odnosi;* see also R. Poplazarov, *Grčkata politika sprema Makedonija vo vtorata polovina na XIX i početokot na XX vek* (Skopje, 1973); K. Bitoski, *Makedonija i Knježestvo Bugaria (1893–1903)* (Skopje, 1977).

10. A. Girginov, *Narodnata katastrofa—voinite 1912–1913g* (Sofia, 1926) pp. 4–5; V. Čorović, *Odnosi izmedju Srbije i Austro-Ugarske u XX veku* (Belgrade, 1936), pp. 322–23.

11. See K. P. Misirkov, *Za makedonckite raboti* (Sofia, 1903), pp. 127–30. See also D. Iaranov, *Makedoniia kato prirodno i stopansko tsialo* (Sofia, 1945).

12. On the partition of Macedonia see A. Rossos, *Russia and the Balkans. Inter-Balkan Rivalries and Russian Foreign Policy 1908–1914* (Toronto, 1981); P. Stojanov, *Makedonija vo vremeto na balkanskite i prvata svetska vojna (1912–1918)* (Skopje, 1969).

donia; and from the 1860s, when they first adopted the name of their land as a national name and symbol, it involved their own self-definition, identity, interests, and future as Macedonians. Thus, the involvement and activities of outsiders evoked reactions on the part of the Macedonians. And this dialectic of action and reaction influenced the process of Macedonian national development. It affected its pace, the forms in which it expressed itself, and its ideological content.[13]

In the initial phase, throughout the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the awakening of the Slav Macedonians expressed itself in scattered stirrings against the Patriarchist Church and the total domination of the Greek language in the local churches and schools, which were under that church's exclusive jurisdiction. During this period neither the Macedonian spokesmen nor the population at large had a clearly defined national or territorial consciousness. The Macedonians referred to themselves by a confusing and shifting mixture of names including local regional identifications, the use of the term Slav, which was the most common one among the masses, and the names of neighboring peoples, whose medieval dynastic states had ruled Macedonia at one time or another. Until the adoption in the 1860s of the territorial name of Macedonia as a term to describe the nation, the name—Bulgarian—seemed to predominate, especially in religious and monastic institutions. According to K.P. Misirkov, the ideologist of Macedonian nationalism around the turn of the century, it was a "historic relic," which was preserved through the Ohrid Archbishopric and was used by the Macedonians to differentiate themselves from the Greeks. It did not imply unity or community with the real Bulgarians, with whom the Macedonians at this time had very little contact and about whom they knew even less.[14]

13. For a clear and authoritative statement of Macedonian national aims see K. P. Misirkov, *Za makedonckite raboti* (Sofia, 1903). K. P. Misirkov (1874–1926) was an outstanding representative and, indeed, an ideologist of Macedonian nationalism. See also B. Ristovski, "Što e toa makedonska prerodba?", "Narodnata kultura vo izgradbata i afirmacijata na makedonskata nacionalna misla," and "Formiranjeto na makedonskata nacija vo svetlosta na formiranjeto i afirmacijata na drugite nacii vo ovoj del na Balkanot," in *Makedonskata nacija*, I, pp. 163–87, 235–62 and 263–80.

14. Misirkov, *Za makedonckite raboti*, pp. 114, 122–26; Ristovski, *Makedonskata nacija*, I; 194–96; Koneski, *Kon makedonskata*, pp. 8–10; Doklestić, *Srpsko-makedonskite odnosi*, pp. 3–36; Džambazovski, *Kulturno-opštestvenite*, pp. 5–57. See also H.G. Lunt, "Some Sociolin-

The intensified and no longer solely educational competition for Macedonia after the Crimean War, and especially the inroads in Macedonia made by the Bulgarian national movement, provoked a significant Macedonian reaction. Some educated Macedonians, called derisively *Makedonisti* by the Bulgarian press, embraced the name—Macedonian—and voiced and defended Macedonian interests. The clash between Bulgarianism and Macedonianism, which began in the decade preceding the establishment of the Exarchate, involved questions of importance in any people's national awakening, language, historical and religious traditions, ethnicity, territorial patriotism, national identity, and so forth. It produced a clear distinction between the interests of the well established Bulgarian movement and the Macedonians, and contributed to the shaping of the national identity of the latter.[15]

The establishment of the Exarchate and the well orchestrated three-way struggle for Macedonia that followed made a normal development of Macedonian consciousness virtually impossible. Squeezed from every side—by the authority of the Ottoman state as well as by the force of three Balkan nationalisms—the young and weak Macedonian intelligentsia and the movement they led lacked room and a free atmosphere in which to function. They did not have, and legally could not have any institutional foundations whatsoever on which to base their activities. Consequently, Macedonians could only operate illegally, underground, and, until the emergence of the revolutionary organization in the 1890s, in forced isolation from the population they sought and claimed to represent.[16]

The great majority of the small Macedonian intelligentsia began their education in schools operated by the outside propaganda insti-

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guistic Aspects of Macedonian and Bulgarian," in B. A. Stolz, I. R. Titunik, and L. Doležel, eds., *Language and Literary Theory* (Ann Arbor, 1984), pp. 97–102, 108; V. A. Friedman, "Macedonian Language and Nationalism During the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," (Balkanistica) pp. 84–86. See also S. Radev, *Makedoniia i bŭlgarskoto vŭzrazhdene v XIX vek* (Sofia, 1927), 2 vols., I, ch. 2.

15. P. R. Slaveikov, "Makedonskiiat vŭpros," *Makedoniia* (Constantinople) 5:3 (January 18, 1871), p. 2; S. Dimevski, "Dve pisma na Petko Račov Slavejkov za makedonizmot," *Razgledi* (Skopje) 14:3 (1973), pp. 561–66; Koneski, *Kon makedonskata prerodba*, pp. 24–56; Friedman, Macedonian Language, pp. 86–87.

16. See note 8. See also Ristovski, *Makedonskata nacija*, I, pp. 250–51, 269; Doklestić, *Srpsko-makedonskite odnosi*, pp. 39–42.

tutions in Macedonia, and were able to continue with their support in Athens, Belgrade, or Sofia. There Macedonian youths mastered the language and became well acquainted with the national ideology and culture of the host-benefactor state. Some embraced the new ideas, were for all practical purposes assimilated into what appeared as a superior culture, and embarked on the road of "philism"—Bulgarian, Greek, or Serbian. The others rejected this road partially or totally and assumed leadership positions in both the Macedonian national and revolutionary movements. In the post-1870 period they coalesced into two major orientations: Macedono-Bulgarianism and Macedonianism.[17]

Macedono-Bulgarianism initially represented an endeavour at a compromise with the Bulgarians, an attempt on the part of a section of the Macedonian intelligentsia to reconcile the lack of a clearly defined Slav Macedonian state and church tradition with the existence of distinct Macedonian cultural traits and political and economic interests. Their efforts, however, came to nothing: the victorious Bulgarian movement was in no mood to compromise with them. This rebuke, their own relative weakness, as well as the intensified three-way struggle for Macedonia, which threatened the unity of the land and its people, forced them to make concessions. They abandoned the demand for an autonomous church and accepted the jurisdiction of the Exarchate and the demand for a compromise Macedonian-Bulgarian literary language, and acquiesced in the use of the Bulgarian language in the schools. As time went on, however, they intensified their efforts in defense of the political, social, and economic interests of Macedonia and its people.[18]

Although the Macedono-Bulgarians, who were educated in Bulgarian institutions, expected sympathy and support from the Bulgarians, the latter consistently condemned the movement as "political separatism." In fact it was much more than that: it represented authentic Macedonian patriotism, indeed Macedonian political con-

17. B. Ristovski, "Kon proučuvanjeto na makedonskite nacionalni naučno-literaturni društva i afirmacijata na makedonskata nacionalna i državnosna misla," *Makedonskata nacija* I, pp. 283–85, 291–93; Koneski, *Kon makedonskata prerodba*, pp. 24–25.

18. Koneski, *Kon makedonskata prerodba* pp. 24–25, 26–86; Ristovski, *Makedonskata nacija*, I, pp. 270, 292; Lunt, "Sociolinguistic aspects," pp. 102–08; Friedman, "Macedonian Language," p. 88; S. Risteski, *Sozdavanjeto na sovremeniot makedonski literaturen jazik* (Skopje, 1988), pp. 38–42.

sciousness and nationalism.[19] By the 1890s the various expressions of Macedonian patriotism and consciousness coalesced into a popular revolutionary movement under the leadership of the newly formed Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO).[20]

The IMRO, which even according to Misirkov, represented a turning point in Macedonian history, raised the slogan of "Macedonia for the Macedonians" in its struggle for the liberation of Macedonia from Turkish rule.[21] The ultimate aim was autonomy for Macedonia within the Ottoman Empire and eventually independence, and further down the road a place in a Slav or a wider Balkan federation. From the outset the IMRO placed the highest premium on the independence of the Macedonian revolutionary movement and stressed over and over again that the struggle in Macedonia was the exclusive task of the Macedonians.[22]

As long as the left wing directed and controlled the movement, and until the aftermath of the ill fated Ilinden uprising of 1903, it placed the emphasis on the Macedonian people (*narod*), on Macedonian patriotism and consciousness, on the equality of all the peoples and religions of Macedonia. After that date, the leadership of the orga-

19. See the writings of leaders and ideologists of Macedonian political nationalism such as Vardarski (P. Pop Arsov), *Stambolovshchinata v Makedoniia i neinite predstaviteli* (Vienna, 1894); G. Petrov, *Makedonskoto osvoboditelno delo na bŭlgarska pochva* (Sofia, 1902), and G. Todorovski, ed., *Makedonskoto osloboditelno delo* (Skopje, 1971), a Macedonian edition of his most important writings on the Macedonian question; and D. Hadži Dimov, *Makedonskoto osvoboditelno delo* (Lom, 1900), *Makedonskiia vŭpros* (Dupnitsa, 1901), *Makedonskiiat vŭpros i uchiteliat* (Kiustendil, 1902). For a Macedonian edition of his works on the Macedonian question see G. Todorovski, ed., *Makedonskoto prašanje* (Skopje, 1974).

20. The literature on the IMRO is vast but of rather uneven quality. See especially Adanir, *Die Makedonische Frage*, chs. 2 and 3; also M. Pandevski, *Nacionalnoto prašanje vo makedonskoto osloboditelno dviženije, 1893–1903* (Skopje, 1974); K. Pandev, *Natsionalnoosvoboditelnoto dvizhenie v Makedoniia i Odrinsko, 1878–1903* (Sofia, 1979); J. de Jong, *Der nationale Kern des makedonischen Problems: Ansatze und Grundlagen einer makedonischen Nationalbewegung, 1890–1903* (Frankfurt, 1982); D. M. Perry, *The Politics of Terror: The Macedonian Revolutionary Movements, 1893–1903* (Durham, N.C., 1988). The works by Kh. Silianov, *Osvoboditelnite borbi na Makedoniia*, 2 vols. (Sofia, 1933, 1943), vol. 1; and D. Kiosev, *Istoriia na makedonskoto natsionalno revoliutsionernno dvizhenie* (Sofia, 1954), parts 2 and 3, are still useful.

21. Misirkov, *Za makedonckite raboti*, pp. 1–2, 75–78.

22. Ibid. See also I. Katardžiev, "Dva pravilnika na VMRO od predilindenskiot period," *Istorija* (Skopje, 1965), pp. 1, 39–50, and "Nekoi prašanja za ustavite i pravilnicite na VMRO do Ilindenskoto vostanie," *Glasnik na INI* (Skopje), 5 (1961), 1, pp. 149–64; K. Pandev, "Ustavi i pravilnitsi na VMORO predi Ilindensko-Preobrazhenskoto vŭstanie," *Izvestiia na Instituta za istoriia*, (Sofia), 21 (1970), pp. 245–75.

nization was taken over by the right wing, who were in fact Bulgarophiles, and its over-all orientation underwent significant changes.[23]

Macedonianism, the other major trend, represented a clear and unambiguous expression of Macedonian national identity and consciousness. This section of the intelligentsia, the so-called Makedonisti, or "national separatists" as the Bulgarians called them, proclaimed the Macedonians a distinct, separate Slav nation. According to them, Macedonians were neither Bulgarians nor Serbs nor Greeks, while the Macedonian speech constituted a separate Slav language somewhere between Bulgarian and Serbian. They condemned all three outside claimants operating in Macedonia and their efforts to divide the Slav Macedonian population into antagonistic camps. As a result, even more than the Macedono-Bulgarians, who at least enjoyed the sympathy of some Bulgarians, the Makedonisti ended up being rejected and persecuted by all three; and they were forced to carry on their work in secret.[24]

Toward the end of the 1880s numerous secret and legal circles and societies became the focal points of Macedonianism. They were formed in Macedonia, but most of them sprang up abroad, either in Belgrade, or in Sofia and in towns in Russia. More than twenty such groups are known to have existed in the period up to the outbreak of the Great War in 1914.[25]

It was within these societies that a clear national program crystallized. It found its fullest elaboration in the work of Krste P. Misirkov, *Za makedonckite raboti,* which he wrote in the Macedonian language in the course of the Ilinden uprising and published in Sofia in December 1903. Briefly stated, its principal aims were: recognition of the Macedonians as a distinct Slav nation; acceptance of the Macedo-

23. Adanir, *Die Makedonische Frage*, ch. 4; Silianov, *Osvoboditelnite borbi*, II; Kiosev, *Istoriia na makedonskoto*, pt. 4.

24. On Macedonianism see especially the works of B. Ristovski: *Makedonskata nacija; Krste Petkov Misirkov, 1874–1926: Prilog kon proučuvanjeto na razvitokot na makedonskata nacionalna misla* (Skopje, 1966); *"Vardar": Naučno-literaturno i opštestveno-političko spisanie na K.P. Misirkov* (Skopje, 1966); *Nace Dimov (1876–1916)* (Skopje, 1973); *Dimitrija Čupovski, 1878–1940 i makedonskoto naučno-literaturno drugarstvo vo Petrograd* (Skopje, 1978), 2 vols.; and G. Todorovski, *Prethodnicite na Misirkov* (Skopje, 1968); S. Dimevski, *Za razvojot na makedonskata nacionalna misla do sozdavanjeto na TMORO* (Skopje, 1980); M. Dogo, *Lingua e Nazionalità in Macedonia. Vicende e pensieri di profeti disarmati, 1902–1903 (Milan, 1985);* Koneski, *Kon makedonskata prerodba* pp. 87–97.

25. Ristovksi, *Makedonskata nacija*, 1, p. 295.

nian speech as a literary language and its introduction in the schools and the administration in Macedonia; re-establishment of the Ohrid archbishopric as a Macedonian autocephalous church and termination of all foreign propaganda in the land; achievement of autonomy within the Ottoman Empire, which would guarantee the unity of the land and the normal national development of the people.[26]

Thus, unlike the revolutionary organization, the Makedonisti sought first and foremost the free and unhindered national cultural development of the Macedonians by ridding Macedonia of the foreign propaganda organizations. For this reason they opposed a revolutionary struggle against the Turks, whom they viewed as potential allies in the more pressing confrontation with those three states who each claimed Macedonia as their own.[27]

The three-way struggle for Macedonia obviously affected the Macedonian masses as well. But its impact there was not as deep or lasting as on sections of the intelligentsia. In the radically altered post-1870 circumstances, the Macedonian population found itself artificially divided into different "faiths," depending on whether they attended a Patriarchist (Greek), Exarchist (Bulgarian), or Serbian church. And, since in the theocratic Ottoman state "faith" denoted "national" affiliation, the Macedonians in their homes, villages, and towns were also being artificially split between Bulgarian, Greek, and Serbian "nations" or rather parties. This, of course, did not represent a successful national assimilation. It only reflected the existence of a peculiar political reality in Macedonia.[28]

The great majority of the Macedonians attended religious services they could not understand; most were illiterate in the 1880s and would remain illiterate, or at best semi-literate, through the interwar years. The vast majority of those who attended schools founded and operated by the relevant propaganda institution could acquire

26. On the ideas and aims of Macedonianism see note 24; and, especially, Misirkov, *Za makedonckite raboti*, and his journal, *Vardar*, a facsimile reprint in Ristovski, "*Vardar*," pt. 3, pp. 83–116; and the facsimile reprint of the journal *Makedonskii golos* (St. Petersburg, 1913–1914), (Skopje, 1968). A selection of sources on Macedonianism is found in Dogo, *Lingua e Nazionalità in Macedonia*, pp. 71–163.

27. For Misirkov's critique of the revolutionary organization and the struggle against the Turks see his *Za makedonckite raboti*, ch. 1, and Ristovski, "Pogledite na Krste Misirkov za Ilindenskoto vostanie," *Makedonskata nacija*, 2, pp. 256–74.

28. L. S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans Since 1453* (New York, 1958), pp. 517–18; Doklestić, *Srpsko-makedonskite odnosi*, p. 43; Ristovski, *Makedonskata nacija*, 1, p. 180.

only a few years of elementary schooling, which was insufficient for learning either of the two Slavic languages, let alone Greek. In any event, the Macedonian speech in its various dialects remained for them the language of the home and of everyday life.

The population at large certainly did not develop a Bulgarian, Greek, or Serbian consciousness. This is clearly evident in the reports of representatives of the Balkan states in the Ottoman Empire as well as of their church officials in Macedonia.[29] The consciousness they were developing was largely shaped by local Macedonian factors: speech, folklore, customs, traditions, regional patriotism, social and economic interests, the IMRO, and so forth—all of which, even before the Ilinden uprising, they identified with their land of Macedonia and with themselves as Macedonians, and which distinguished them from their neighbors. They had a sense of belonging which colored their perception of themselves and of others, and they normally expressed it with the dichotomy, *naš* (our, Macedonian)-*čuž* (foreign, outside).[30] This prevalent attitude of what we may call Macedonianism or *našism* of the masses served as a barrier against the entrenchment of the foreign national ideologies among the Macedonians. It was also a useful mask or disguise for their Macedonianism which protected them from persecution.[31]

29. See a revealing letter from the Bulgarian Bishop of Skopje to D. Rizov, the Bulgarian trade representative in Skopje, August 20, 1897. Bulgarski istoricheskii arkhiv (Sofia). *Fond 178 (D. Rizov)*, IIB 8252. Džambazovski, *Kulturno-opštestvenite vrski*, pp. 163, 177–80, 198, 245–46; K. Džambazovski, "Tugite propagandi vo Makedonija vo tekot na XIX vek i razvitokot na makedonskata nacionalna svest i državnost" in M. Apostoiski, ed., *ASNOM: Ostvaruvanje na ideite za sozdavanje na makedonskata država i negoviot megjunaroden odglas i odraz* (Skopje, 1977) pp. 381–85. See also Šumadinac (V. Karić), *Društvo za eksploatisanje patriotizma kon naroda na balkanskim poluostrvu* (Belgrade, 1892) p. 30.

30. In 1934, a Bulgarian official complained about a certain Macedonian activist who, while inspecting schools in Nevrokop, did not miss an opportunity to declare to the pupils that it was the last year that they will be taught in the Bulgarian language. "By next year we will be teaching *na našinski* [in our language, in Macedonian]." Quoted in Ristovski, *Makedonska a nacija*, 2, p. 553. And, in 1936, in Zagreb, the Macedonian student society "Vardar," published the first and only issue of its organ *Naš vesnik*. In the introductory articles stating its aims, the word Macedonian could not and was not used. Instead, it declared that its aim was to acquaint the public with "the life of our region," "the life of our people," with "the immense wealth of our popular folklore," with "our countless melodic and warm folk songs," with "the originality and beauty of our folk customs." *Naš vesnik* (Zagreb) I, 1 (30 March 1937), p. 1.

31. See note 29, and I. Katardžiev, *Borzba za razvoj i afirmacija na makedonskata nacija* (Skopje, 1981), pp. 133, 138–39, 192; B. Ristovski, *Makedonskiot folklor i nacionalnata svest* (Skopje, 1987), 2 vols. *I*, pp. 154–355. See also Misirkov, *Za makedonckite raboti*, ch. 4;

The Macedonianism (našism) of the masses was grasped clearly by Captain P.H. Evans, a British officer with the Special Operations Executive (SOE), who was dropped in western Aegean Macedonia in September 1943 and spent almost a year in the area as a liaison officer (BLO) and station commander. During this prolonged and uncontrolled stay there he lived and moved freely among the Macedonians, "who accepted and trusted him." He described them as "temperamental and distrustful creatures." They had lived under so many different masters that they developed "a perfect duplicity" of character and "this makes them difficult to know. . . It is hard to find out what they are thinking." "The ordinary Macedonian villager," continued Evans, "is curiously neutral, he adopts a protective colouring and, like the chameleon, can change it when necessary."[32] However, he had absolutely no doubt about their Macedonianism:

> It is also important to emphasise that the inhabitants, just as they are not GREEKS, are also not BULGARIANS or SERBS or CROATS. They are MACEDONIANS. . . . The GREEKS always call them BULGARS and damn them accordingly. . . . If they were BULGARS, how is it that while they are spread over part of four countries, one of which is Bulgaria, they consider themselves a single entity and for the most part describe themselves as "MACEDONIANS?. . .
>
> The Macedonians are actuated by strong but mixed feelings of patriotism. . ., a thriving and at times fervent local patriotism; and a feeling hard to assess because rarely uttered before a stranger . . . , for MACEDONIA as such, regardless of present frontier-lines, which are looked upon as usurpation. . . .
>
> The same tenacity comes out in Macedonian songs, the traditional ones as well as those which have been made expressly in the present war. It is true that the songs usually mention MACEDONIA and not one particular place in MACEDONIA, but the feeling which runs through them is a simple and direct love of country, not an intellectual enthusiasm for a political idea. . . . Passing through them all is the MACEDONIAN's love of the place he lives in. . . .

K. Hron, *Das Volkstum der Slawen Makedoniens* (Vienna. 1890); P.D. Draganov, *Makedonskoslavianskii sbornik s prilozheniem slovaria* (St. Petersburg, 1894).

32. Public Records Office (London), F.O. 371/43649, Chancery (Athens) to Southern Department, December 12, 1944, "Report on the Free Macedonia Movement in Area Florina 1944," Enclosure 14, pp. 4–5.

> Macedonian patriotism is not artificial; it is natural, a spontaneous and deep-rooted feeling which begins in childhood, like everyone else's patriotism.[33]

The difficult situation and sentiments of the Macedonian masses, before and after the partition of 1913, were captured well also by Colonel A.C. Corfe. He was a New Zealander, and President of the League of Nation's Mixed Commission on Greco-Bulgarian Emigration. After the Commission toured western Aegean Macedonia in July 1923, he wrote:

> They had nothing to say as long as there was any Greek official of any sort about. But in the evenings in their own houses or when we had given the officials the slip, we encouraged them to speak freely to us. Then we invariably heard the same story.—"Bad administration. They want to force us to become Greeks, in language, in religion, in sentiment, in every way. We have served in the Greek army and we have fought for them: now they insult us by calling us 'damned Bulgars'. "
> To my question "What do you want? an autonomous Macedonia or a Macedonia under Bulgaria?" the answer was generally the same: We want good administration. We are Macedonians, not Greeks or Bulgars. Give us a good father and we will be good children. We don't want bands of any sort coming to our villages. We want to be left in peace.[34]

Thus, contrary to the official Bulgarian, Greek, and Serbian denial even of the existence of a Macedonian sentiment, a distinct Macedonian national consciousness, identity, and ideology had been forming in the course of the half century preceding the partition of 1913. Within the ranks of the small intelligentsia, Macedono-Bulgarianism and Macedonianism constituted a duality, a parallel development of Macedonian national consciousness in a political and territorial sense, on the one hand; and, on the other, of Macedonian national consciousness in an ethnic and cultural sense as well.[35] The Macedonianism (našism) of the masses was an inarticulate Macedo-

33. Ibid., pp. 2–4.
34. Public Records Office (London), F.O. 371/8566, Bentinck (Athens) to Curzon, August 20, 1923, Enclosure 4–5.
35. Ristovski, *Makedonskata nacija* I, pp. 283–85.

nian consciousness and identity, which survived in all three parts of Macedonia well into the 1930s, and is still to be found among Macedonians in Aegean and Pirin Macedonia and among older émigrés abroad in Canada, the U.S.A., and Australia.

Such parallel and, to a certain extent, separate development of Macedonian consciousness and identity weakened Macedonian nationalism as a movement. In the final analysis, however, it appears as an unavoidable consequence of the hazy historical tradition; it resulted above all from the complex contemporary reality of Macedonia and the Macedonians. The various trends would be bridged only in the 1930s and under entirely different circumstances.

For the Macedonians the inter-war period was conditioned by the tragic Balkan wars and the partition of their land. The peace conferences and treaties ending the Great War, which for many other "small" and "young" peoples of Eastern Europe represented the realization of the dream of national self-determination, denied this right to the Macedonians. With some minor territorial modifications at the expense of the once-again-defeated Bulgaria, they confirmed the partition of Macedonia already sanctioned by the Treaty of Bucharest of August 10, 1913. For the victorious allies, especially Great Britain and France, this meant putting the Macedonian problem finally to rest, and at the same time they were satisfying two of their clients and the pillars of the new order in South Eastern Europe—the Kingdom of Greece and the former Kingdom of Serbia, now the dominant factor in the newly created Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, or Yugoslavia. Even though the territorial acquisitions in Macedonia did not necessarily satisfy their fondest hopes, official Athens and Belgrade also pretended that Macedonia and the Macedonian problem had ceased to exist. Belgrade proclaimed Vardar Macedonia to be Old Serbia and the Macedonians as Old Serbians; for Athens, Aegean Macedonia became simply northern Greece and its Slavic-speaking Macedonians were considered Greeks or at best "Slavophone" Greeks.

Bulgaria, the third partitioning power, enjoyed the greatest influence among the Macedonians, but having been defeated in both the Inter-Allied and the Great Wars, it ended up with the smallest part, Pirin Macedonia, or the Petrich district as it became known during the inter-war years. Unlike official Athens and Belgrade, the ruling

elite in Sofia did not consider the settlement permanent. But without sympathy among the victorious Great Powers and threatened by revolutionary turmoil at home, they had to swallow the bitter pill and accept it for the time being. In any event, for the Agrarian government of A. Stamboliski the Macedonian question was not a priority.[36]

Once the new rulers had consolidated their control over the respective parts of Macedonia, they initiated policies the aim of which was the destruction of all signs of Macedonian nationalism, patriotism, or particularism. This was to be accomplished through forced deportations and so-called voluntary exchanges of populations, forced transfers of the Macedonian population internally, colonization, social and economic discrimination, and forced de-nationalization and assimilation, through the total control of the educational systems and of cultural and intellectual life as a whole.

These policies were pursued systematically and with great determination in Yugoslavia and Greece. Belgrade went so far as to "Serbicize" personal names and surnames.[37] Athens went even further. Since it was not possible to simply "Greekocize" them, they were replaced by Greek names and surnames. The same was done with place names; and indeed, Athens made a concerted effort to eradicate once and for all any reminders of the centuries-old Slav presence in Aegean Macedonia. This reached its most tragic dimensions in the second half of the 1930s, during the dictatorship of General Metaxas, when use of the Macedonian language was prohibited even in the privacy of the home to a people who knew Greek scarcely or not at all, and in fact could not communicate properly in any other language but their own.[38]

36. H. Andonov-Poljanski, *Velika Britania i makedonskoto prašanje na pariskata mirovna konferencija vo 1919 godina* (Skopje, 1973); I. Katardžiev, *Vreme na zreenje: Makedonskoto nacionalno prašanje megju dvete svetski vojni 1919–1930*, (Skopje, 1977) 2 vols., I, ch. I. Katardžiev provides the most comprehensive, valuable, and interesting treatment of the Macedonian national question in the 1920s.

37. On developments in Vardar Macedonia see I. Katardžiev, *Vreme na zreenje*, I, pp. 23–85; Institut za nacionalna istorija, *Istorija na makedonskiot narod* (Skopje, 1969), 3 vols., 3, pt. 11; see also A. Apostolov, *Kolonizacijata na Makedonija vo stara Jugoslavija* (Skopje, 1966), and "Specifičnata položba na makedonskiot narod vo kralstvoto Jugoslavija," *Glasnik na INI* (1972), 16:1, pp. 39–62.

38. On the situation of the Macedonians in Aegean Macedonia see Katardžiev, *Vreme na zreenje*, I, pp. 85–106; *Istorija na makedonskiot narod*, 3, part 13; S. Kiselinovski, *Grčkata*

An additional aim of such policies on the part of these two states was to destroy each other's influence and that of Bulgaria in their respective parts of Macedonia. The Serbs terminated the Patriarchist and Exarchist presence in Vardar Macedonia; prohibiting all their activities, they took over or closed down their institutions and organizations and dismissed or expelled their remaining personnel. The Greeks acted in exactly the same way: they put an end to the widespread Exarchist as well as to the more limited Serbian involvement in Aegean Macedonia.

After the overthrow of the Stamboliski regime in June 1921, revisionist Bulgaria, where Bulgarophilism and Macedono-Bulgarianism and Macedonianism were well entrenched especially among the huge Macedonian emigration in its capital, assumed a more ambiguous position. Sofia chose to continue its traditional patronizing attitude toward all Macedonians and to claim them as Bulgarians. It encouraged and sought to use Macedonian discontent and Macedonian movements to further its own revisionist aims.[39]

Bulgaria's revisionism, which thus split the ranks of the partitioning powers, was of great significance for the future of Macedonianism. No matter how much Greece and Yugoslavia, and their patrons from among the Great Powers, pretended officially that the Macedonian question had been resolved and had ceased to exist, Bulgarian policies helped to keep it alive.[40] More importantly still, the Macedonians, both in the large emigration in Bulgaria as well as at home, rejected the partition of their land and the settlement based upon it.

To be sure, this settlement had come as a shock to them. Instead of the expected liberation, the Turkish yoke had been replaced by new and harsher foreign regimes. Organized Macedonian activity, which had declined after the bloody suppression of the Ilinden uprising and the blows inflicted by the repeated partitions and repartitions of the

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kolonizacija vo Egejska Makedonija, 1913–1940 (Skopje, 1981); L. Mojsov, *Okolu prašanjeto na makedonskoto nacionalno malcinstvo vo Grcija* (Skopje, 1954) pp. 207–87; G. Abadžiev, et al., *Egejska Makedonija vo našata nacionalna istorija* (Skopje 1951).

39. On Pirin Macedonia as well as the Macedonians in Bulgaria see Katardžiev, *Vreme na zreenje*, I, pp. 107–19; *Istorija na makedonskiot narod* 3, part 12; D. Mitrev, *Pirinska Makedonija* (Skopje, 1970), pp. 126–202.

40. See S. Troebst, *Mussolini, Makedonien und die Machte, 1922–1930. Die "Innere Makedonische Revolutionare Organization" in der Südosteuropapolitik der faschistischen Italien* (Köln, 1987); and Barker, *Macedonia*, ch. 2; Stavrianos, *Balkan Federation*, chs. 8 and 9.

wars from 1912 to 1918, came to a virtual standstill in the immediate post-World War I period in Aegean and Vardar Macedonia. Virtually the entire Exarchist educated elite and most Macedonian activists from Aegean Macedonia and large numbers from Vardar Macedonia were forced to leave and now sought refuge in Bulgaria.[41] Furthermore, the remaining Macedonian population in Aegean Macedonia, overwhelmingly rural and lacking an educated elite, found itself after the Greek-Turkish War (1919–1922) a minority in its own land as a result of the Greek government's conscious and planned settlement of large numbers of Greek and other Christian refugees from Asia Minor.[42] The situation among the Macedonians in Bulgaria was only slightly more encouraging. True, there was a large concentration of Exarchist-educated Macedonians and of Macedonian activists both in the Pirin region and in Sofia. However, they were split between Left and Right; and there were deep divisions within each camp. Demoralization had set in, and an agonizing process of soul searching ensued which eventually led to a regrouping of forces among the Macedonians there.[43]

Nonetheless, opposition to foreign rule existed in all three parts of Macedonia from the very outset, and the systematic anti-Macedonian policies of the respective governments only seemed to intensify it. In the early 1920s, this opposition was fueled by the Macedonianism (našism) of the masses, as well as by the Macedonianism and Macedono-Bulgarianism of the small intelligentsia and by the larger but divided revolutionary and patriotic organizations. True Bulgarophilism was still a factor in the early 1920s and continued to enjoy considerable influence among the better established segments of the Macedonian émigrés in Bulgaria throughout the inter-war years. But in Aegean and Vardar Macedonia, where the Exarchist presence had been uprooted, Bulgarian influence was declining. It survived as a "relic of the past," once again to use Miserkov's term, only among some members of the older generation.

That the discontent and opposition was of considerable proportions was clearly evident in the support given to the terrorist activities

41. Katardžiev, *Vreme na zreenje* I, part 2, ch. 1.

42. S. Kiselinovski, *Grčkata kolonizacija* ch. 4.

43. Katardžiev, *Vreme na zreenje*, I, part 2, ch.1; Kiosev, *Istoriia na makedonskoto*, pp. 493–99.

of the IMRO in the 1920s. Of course, the IMRO was no longer the popular revolutionary movement of the pre-1903 period. By the mid 1920s it had clearly emerged as a terrorist organization, a virtual ruler in Pirin Macedonia and a state within a state in Bulgaria, serving its own ends by relying on the Bulgarian reaction and Italian fascism and allowing itself to be used by both. Officially—and very conspicuously—however, it championed the aims and claimed the slogans of the old movement: "united autonomous or independent Macedonia" and "Macedonia for the Macedonians." Thus, more than anything else at the time, it kept the Macedonian question in the public eye and, as a champion of Macedonia and the Macedonians, it continued to enjoy considerable mass support throughout most of the decade.[44]

More importantly, however, the widespread opposition to the existing status quo was also demonstrated by the results of the first post-war elections, the freest to be held in the three partitioning states during the inter-war years. Surprisingly, significant electoral support in all three parts of Macedonia went to the newly formed Communist parties, which from the outset also rejected the status quo and became declared champions of the cause of Macedonia and the Macedonians.[45] They were destined to play a very significant role in this final phase in the development of Macedonianism and the formation of the Macedonian nation.

The ruling elites in the Balkan states and their bourgeois parties continued to deny the existence of a Macedonian nationality and they supported the policies of forced assimilation. The Comintern and the Balkan Communist parties, on the other hand, realized very early the great potential of the Macedonian problem for creating instability in the peninsula and for the cause of Balkan, and, indeed, European revolution. At the same time, and in line with the united front policies of the early 1920s, they understood that while

44. Katardžiev, *Vreme na zreenje*, 1, pp. 171–83 and part 2, ch. 2; Kiosev, *Istoriia na makedonskoto*, pp. 512–28. On the activities of the IMRO in all three parts of Macedonia see also the memoirs of its leader after 1924, I. Mikhailov *Spomeni* (Selci, Louvain, Indianapolis, 1952, 1965, 1967, 1973), 4 vols.

45. Katardžiev, *Vreme na zreenje*, I, pp. 375–76; *Istorija na makedonskiot narod*, 3, pp. 20–23, 176–78; E. Kofos, *Nationalism and Communism in Macedonia* (Thessaloniki, 1964) p. 69; D. G. Kousoulas, *Revolution and Defeat: The Story of the Communist Party of Greece* (London, 1965), p. 65.

they could provide encouragement and support for the Macedonian cause, the movement itself would have to be identified with and led by Macedonians.[46]

For this reason they sought to unite the better organized and more effective Right, grouped around the IMRO led by Todor Alexandrov, with the various groups that comprised the Macedonian Left; to bring the united movement under Communist influence, and then, if possible, to bring it actually into the Comintern. Serious negotiations to forge a united Macedonian revolutionary front began in 1923, and were successfully concluded in Vienna in April-May of 1924, with the signing of a series of accords calling for unification on the basis of a program similar to that of the original IMRO of the Ilinden period.[47] However, the renunciation shortly thereafter of their signatures, and thus of the accords, by two of the three leaders and signatories from the Right, T. Alexandrov and A. Protogerov, finalized the split within the movement which, in one form or another, had existed from the very inception of the IMRO in 1893.[48]

The Right, which retained the name IMRO, was taken over after Alexandrov's assassination in September 1924 by Ivan (Vančo) Mihailov; and, as already suggested, it soon degenerated into a self serving terrorist organization. Although it continued to exploit the patriotic sentiments of the Macedonians, it offered no national program or national vision. It possessed no clear political aims or serious social or economic ideas, and, as time went on, it was perceived as, and in fact became, an instrument of Bulgarian and Italian revision-

46. On the attitudes of the Comintern and the Balkan Communist parties on the Macedonian question see Katardžiev, *Vreme na zreenje* I, part 3, chs. 1 (Comintern), 2 (CPY), 3 (CPG), 4 (CPB); Kiselinovski, *KPG i makedonskoto nacionalno prašanje, 1918–1940* (Skopje, 1985), chs. 2–4; K. Miljovski, *Makedonskoto prašanje vo nacionalnata programa na KPJ, 1919–1937* (Skopje, 1962), pp. 24–109; D. Mitrev, *BKP i Pirinska Makedonija* (Skopje, 1960), pp. 42–62. Kofos, *Nationalism*, ch. 4; D. Pačemska, *Vnatrešnata makedonska revolucionerna organizacija (Obedineta)* (Skopje, 1985), ch. 1.

47. On the Vienna negotiations, including the texts of the accords, see CK na VMRO (Ob.), Katardžiev, ed., *Predavnicite na makedonskoto delo* (Skopje, 1983), pp. 107–139. The original Bulgarian edition of this official publication of the Central Committee of the IMRO (Un.) appeared in Prague in 1926. See also Mikhailov, *Spomeni*, 2, pp. 312–29, and the reminiscences of Mikhailov's opponent on the left and founder and leader of the IMRO (Un.), D. Vlahov, *Memoari* (Skopje, 1970), pp. 229–44; and Katardžiev, *Vreme na zreenje*, I, pp. 219–66; Kiosev, *Istoriia na makedonskoto*, pp. 500–504; Pačemska, *VMRO (Ob.)*, pp. 47–61.

48. Ibid.; *Predavnicite*, pp. 140–175; Mikhailov, pp. 312–29; Vlahov, pp. 244–48; Katardžiev, pp. 266–71; Kiosev, pp. 500–504; Pačemska, pp. 64–68.

ism. For all practical purposes its end came after the military coup in Sofia, in May 1934, when the new regime decided that it was more trouble than it was worth. The organization was liquidated and those leaders who did not succeed in escaping were arrested or expelled.[49]

The Left embraced the accords of 1924 as its platform and the following year formed its own organization under the name of IMRO (United). It was recognized at once by the Comintern and accepted as a partner in the Balkan Communist Federation. Until its dissolution in 1936 it sought to act as a Communist party of Macedonia, and in fact attempted to play the part of a Communist-led Macedonian national or popular front.[50]

At the beginning the Comintern, the Balkan Communist parties, and the IMRO (Un.) as the original IMRO had done, emphasized the existence of a Macedonian political consciousness and a Macedonian nation and embraced the cause of Macedonia's liberation and re-unification. This was to be achieved through a socialist revolution, paving the way for the establishment of a Balkan Communist federation, in which reunited Macedonia would become an equal partner with the other Balkan nations.[51]

Their heightened interest in the Macedonian question brought Communists in the Balkans into closer contact with the Macedonian masses, whose support they sought to win. They became acquainted with their local loyalties, language, customs, social and economic interests; that is, with their Macedonianism. Moreover, the Communists recruited young Macedonians who, unlike their fathers and grandfathers, experienced in their formative years not the patronizing ways of competing outside propaganda institutions, but the harsh realities of foreign rule—exploitation, discrimination, forced assimilation. And these young recruits now brought the Macedonianism of the masses into the Communist organizations.

49. There is no comprehensive work on the IMRO under T. Aleksandrov and I. Mikhailov. See note 44 and Katardžiev, *Vreme na zreenje*, I, pp. 271–96; Troebst, *Mussolini, Makedonien und die Machte*. See also S. Christowe, *Heroes and Assassins* (New York, 1935) and J. Swire, *Bulgarian Conspiracy* (London, 1940).

50. Katardžiev, *Vreme na zreenje*, II, and "VMRO (Obedineta), pojava, razvoj i dejnost" in *Predavnicite na makedonskoto delo* (Introduction), pp. 5–56; Pačemska, *VMRO (Ob.)*, pp. 68ff.; Kiosev, *Istoriia na makedonskoto*, pp. 503–511; D. Vlahov, *Makedonija. Momenti od istorijata na makedonskiot narod* (Skopje, 1950), pp. 315–28 and *Memoari*, part II, pp. 251–366.

51. See note 46.

Both the masses to whom the parties wanted to appeal and the Macedonian recruits within their ranks influenced the IMRO (Un.) and the Communist parties and pushed them in the direction of Macedonianism. By the late 1920s and early 1930s the Balkan Communist parties, after long and heated debates, embraced Macedonianism and officially recognized the Macedonians as a distinct Slav ethnic nation with its own language, history, culture, territory, interests.[52] The Comintern's official recognition came in 1934.[53]

The role of the IMRO (Un.) in Balkan Communist politics and in providing an organizational drive and basis for the development of Communism and nationalism in Macedonia has been neglected even by Communist historiography in the Balkans, including that of the Macedonians. The reason for such a glaring omission is to be found in the ambivalent attitudes towards the Macedonian question of the Communist parties of the three interested Balkan states as well as in their relationship with the IMRO (Un.). Of course, the Communist parties, directed or indeed pressured by Moscow, paid lip service to the Macedonian cause, but they relegated the resolution of the Macedonian question to a Balkan Communist federation in the conveniently uncertain and distant future. All the available evidence, though it remains limited, suggests that they did not entertain seriously the possibility of parting with the Macedonian lands conquered by their respective bourgeois governments in 1912–1913. Their primary interest, and this was true of the Comintern as well, was to use the Macedonian question for ideological purposes: to further the class struggle and the cause of the socialist revolution.

On the other hand, the IMRO (Un.) and Macedonian Communists in general, while taking ideology, class struggle, and revolution seriously, took far greater interest in the Macedonian national cause. Also, the Balkan Communist parties, to whom many, if not most, of the active followers of the IMRO (Un.) belonged, did not approve of the parallel and divided loyalties of their Macedonian comrades.

52. Katardžiev, *Vreme na zreenje*, II, part V, and *Borba za razvoj i afirmacija*, p. 201–76; Kiselinovski, *KPG i makedonskoto*, pp. 63–72; Mitrev, *BKP i Pirinska Makedonija* pp. 57–59; Miljovski, *Makedonskoto nacionalno prašanje*, pp. 109–140; Pačemska, *VMRO (Ob.)* pp. 77–160; Vlahov, *Makedonija*, p. 317, and *Memoari*, pp. 355–58.

53. "Polozhenieto v Makedoniia i zadachite na VMRO (Obedinena). Edna rezoliutsia na CK na VMRO (Obed.)." *Makedonsko delo*, 8: 185 (April, 1934), pp. 1–2; Katardžiev in *Predavnicite na makedonskoto delo*, pp. 44–46.

Consequently, throughout its existence, the IMRO (Un.), though it was supported by the Comintern, was only tolerated, but never really accepted fully by the fraternal Communist parties in the peninsula. Indeed, evidence seems to suggest that its dissolution in 1936 came about not only as a result of the changed tactics of the Comintern, but also because it was welcomed by the Balkan Communist parties.[54] There were always sharp differences on the Macedonian question among the Balkan Communist parties, and between their respective national interests and those of Macedonian nationalism. These differences were to prove highly detrimental for the cause of Macedonian liberation and unification later.

In the meantime, however, the line on the Macedonian question, dictated by the Comintern and preached by the Communist parties in the Balkans, was of the utmost importance for the maturing and consolidation of Macedonian nationalism. Their acceptance of the existence of a separate Macedonian ethnic nation represented its first official recognition by an international movement led by a great power, the Soviet Union. More importantly, however, during the late 1920s and particularly the 1930s, the Communist parties and the IMRO (Un.) and their numerous legal, semi-legal and illegal organs and front organizations in divided Macedonia encouraged and supported not only the growth of class- but also of national consciousness. The party cells and the numerous Macedonian political, cultural, literary, and sports groups, clubs, societies, and associations which the IMRO (Un.) and the Communist parties sponsored and supported, especially in Skopje, Sofia, Belgrade and Zagreb, became the training ground, the schools, of the nationally conscious Macedonian intelligentsia on the Left. They provided Macedonian nationalism with its first systematic legal or semi-legal institutional infrastructure; with a home and with organized bases, which, in the absence of a Macedonian national church, the earlier generations of the Macedonian intelligentsia had not been able to establish in the theocratic Ottoman Empire. And it was under the auspices of such organizations and through the work of their members of

54. See especially B. Ristovski, "The 1934 Comintern Resolution on the Macedonian Nation in the Development of Macedonian National Culture," *Review-Glasnik* (Skopje), 30:3 (1986), pp. 99–119; I. Katardžiev in *Predavnicite na makedonskoto delo*, pp. 5–56 and *Borba za razvoj i afirmacija*, pp. 201–76; see also Katardžiev, *Vreme na zreenje*, II, pp. 175–220.

this new generation of the Macedonian intelligentsia that the different trends and orientations in the Macedonian movement—the Macedonianism (našism) of the masses, the Macedonianism and Macedono-Bulgarianism of the intelligentsia—gradually coalesced into a Macedonianism and Macedonian nationalism on the Left.[55]

All in all, their endeavors represented a remarkable affirmation of Macedonian national life, consciousness, and thought. They prepared the ground for the development of a Macedonian literary language and facilitated the growth of a Macedonian national culture and political thought. Needless to say, however, this process could not, and did not, develop at the same pace and with the same intensity in all three parts of divided Macedonia.

Conditions for national development were least favorable in Aegean Macedonia, which had contributed so much to the Macedonian awakening in the past. Now, there was no longer any large Macedonian urban center there, and the Macedonian population was scattered in small, mainly mountainous towns and villages. The number of well educated Macedonians was small and their education in Greek tended to estrange them from their Slavic roots and cultural traditions. Moreover, the IMRO (Un.) had started there rather late, and its activities lagged behind those in the other two parts of Macedonia. It was also virtually impossible to establish even elementary printing facilities in the Cyrilic alphabet; and, finally, as we have already said, the use of the Macedonian language was prohibited during the dictatorship of General Metaxas even in the privacy of the home.[56]

Rizospastis, the organ of the Central Committee of the Communist party of Greece, the only official organ of a Balkan Communist party to be legally published through most of the inter-war years, was before 1936 the sole important publication in Greece to recognize the Macedonians and come to their defense. In addition to its ideological

55. *Istorija na makedonskiot narod*, 3, pp. 47–56, 73–77, 84–89, 97–113, 137–53 (Vardar Macedonia); 223–44 (Pirin Macedonia); 261–73 (Aegean Macedonia).

56. On conditions in Aegean Macedonia see *ibid.*, and R. Poplazarov, "Sotsial'noe i natsional'no-osvoboditel'noe dvizhenie Makedoncev v Egeiskoi Makedonii s 20-kh po 50-e godi xx veka", A. Matkovski, ed., *Macédoine* (Skopje, 1981), pp. 421–41; J. Papadopulos, "Od borbata na makedonskiot narod vo Egejska Makedonija," *Razgledi* (Skopje), 28:9 (1976), pp. 1152–55 and "Od Aktivnosta na VMRO (Obedineta) vo egejskiot del na Makedonija," *Razgeldi* 21:1 (1979) pp. 108–17; S. Risteski, *Sozdavanjeto na sovremeniot*, pp. 88–103.

condemnation of the bourgeois regimes in Athens, it also consistently attacked their policy of national oppression, discrimination, and forced assimilation against the Macedonians.[57] Macedonians, on the other hand, accepted *Rizospastis* as their sole leader and defender. Their many letters and other communications to this newspaper were frequently and affectionately addressed to "Dear Rizo," "our only defender."[58] They were sometimes written in Macedonian, "the only language we know," though in the Greek script.[59] They were mostly signed "a Macedonian" or "a group of Macedonians from"—and then the name of the village or town. They used the pages of *Rizospastis* as their mouthpiece, the only available platform from which to declare their Macedonian national identity and the existence of their Macedonian nation, and to demand their national rights.

A letter from the village Ekši-Su, signed "many Macedonians-fighters," stated:

> We must declare loudly to the Greek rulers that we are neither Greeks, nor Bulgarians, nor Serbs, but pure Macedonians.
>
> We have behind us a history, a past rich with struggles for the liberation of Macedonia, and we will continue that struggle until we free ourselves.[60]

And, rejecting remarks made by A. Pejos, a parliamentary deputy, the leader of an IMRO (Un.) group in Gumendže, wrote:

> We declare to you that we are neither Greeks, nor Bulgarians, nor Serbs! We are Macedonians with our language, with our culture, with our customs and history. . . .
>
> Do you think, Mr. Pejo, that they [Gruev, Tošev, Delčev, etc] were Bulgarians?[61] No, they were Macedonians and fought for a united and independent Macedonia.[62]

57. J. Popovski, ed., *Makedonskoto prašanje na stranicite od "Rizospastis" megju dvete vojni* (Skopje, 1982) pp. 5–11.

58. See for instance *O Neos rizospastis*, August 19, 1933, p. 4; *Rizospastis*, May 23, 1934 p. 2, and July 22, 1934, p.4.

59. *Rizospastis*, November 22, 1934, p. 1; October 3, 1934, p. 5; October 13, 1934, p. 3; January 30, 1935, p. 1; August 3, 1935, p. 4.

60. Ibid., November 1, 1934, p. 3.

61. They were founders and leaders of the original IMRO.

62. *Rizospastis*, July 3, 1935, p. 4.

The aims of the Macedonians in Greece are perhaps best reflected in a lengthy communication, signed G. Slavos, on behalf of an IMRO (Un.) group in Voden (Edesa). He wrote:

> We, Macedonians here, held a conference where one of our comrades spoke to us about the program of the IMRO (Un.) and about how the minorities live in the Soviet Union.
>
> He told us that the Macedonians in Bulgaria and Serbia are fighting under the leadership of the Communist parties for a united and independent Macedonia.
>
> We declare that we will fight for our freedom under the leadership of the Communist Party of Greece and demand that our schools have instruction in the Macedonian language.
>
> We also insist on not being called Bulgarians, for we are neither Bulgarians, nor Serbs, nor Greeks, but Macedonians.
>
> We invite all Macedonians to join the ranks of the IMRO (Un.), and all of us together will fight for a free Macedonia.[63]

Although Royal Yugoslavia was as determined to stamp out all signs of Macedonianism as the regime in Athens, conditions in Vardar Macedonia proved more conducive for its development. The urban centers such as Skopje, its administrative capital, and such towns as Bitola, Prilep, Veles, Ohrid, and other district administrative centers retained their Macedonian character. The number of educated Macedonians was growing with each graduating class from the town high schools and the Philosophical Faculty in Skopje, and with the growing number of young Macedonians attending universities elsewhere in Yugoslavia, especially in Belgrade and Zagreb. True, the language of their formal education was Serbian or Croatian, but this was not necessarily at the expense of Macedonian, for that remained the language of their home, and indeed unofficially the language of everyday life in the villages and towns. The Great Serbian content of their education was countered by Macedonianism, for the towns, the high schools and especially the institutions of higher learning were hotbeds of leftist radicalism.[64]

63. Ibid.

64. B. Ristovski, *Kočo Racin: Istorisko-literaturni istražuvanja* (Skopje, 1983), pp. 9–176. S. Fidanova, "KPJ vo Makedonija vo vremeto od 1929 godina do aprilskata vojna,"

As already pointed out, the use of the national name was prohibited and so were publishing in Macedonian and even Macedonian publications in Serbo-Croatian. Nonetheless, in the 1930s Macedonian intellectuals were no longer content solely with protestations of the existence of the Macedonian nation and language. They went beyond that, and in the oppressive conditions of the time consciously worked to create a Macedonian literary language and a national culture. They even found a way to get around the official ban, wrote on Macedonian themes in Serbo-Croatian as well as in Macedonian, and were able to publish at least some of their Macedonian writings in publications in Skopje and in Belgrade or Zagreb or in illegal publications of the CPY.[65]

The playwrights V. Il'oski, A. Panov, and R. Krle wrote in Macedonian and the performances of their plays were welcomed and acclaimed as national manifestations by the public in Vardar Macedonia.[66] The communist activist and talented essayist and poet Kočo Solev Racin published studies on the political and cultural history of the Macedonians in such Yugoslav periodicals of the Left as *Kritika, Literatura, Naša stvarnost,* and *Naša reč.* But his most important work, possibly the most outstanding and influential literary achievement in the Macedonian language before the war, was *Beli Mugri,* a collection of his poetry published illegally in Sambor, near Zagreb, in 1939.[67] Two other young and gifted poets, V. Markovski and K. Nedelkovski, were born and spent their formative years in

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Istorija, 16:1 (1980), pp. 57–101; L. Sokolov, "Prilog za makedonskoto studentsko dviženje vo Zagreb," *Istorija,* 12:1–2 (1976), pp. 1–27; A. Apostolov, "Od aktivnosta na naprednite studenti na Belgradskiot univerzitet vo 1936 godina. (Nekolku neobjaveni dokumenti.) *Istorija* 12:1–2 (1976), pp. 28–63; D. Čalić and V. Burzevski, "O aktivnosti komunističke partije u dobu stare Jugoslavije medju makedonskim studentima na Zagrebačkom sveučilištu," *ASNOM. Ostvaruvanje,* pp. 393–97; Miljovski, *Makedonskoto prašanje,* pp. 140–54; P. Mitreski, *Studentskata kolonija vo Ohrid, 1938–1940* (Skopje, 1985).

65. B. Ristovski, *Projavi i profili od makedonskata literaturna istorija* (Skopje, 1982) 2 vols., I, pp. 259–61; S. Risteski, *Sozdavanjeto na sovremeniot makedonski literaturen jazik,* pp. 79–88; M. Drugovac, *Makedonskata literatura. (Od Misirkov do Racin.)* (Skopje, 1975), pp. 69–74.

66. Drugovac, ibid., pp. 69–145; A. Aleksiev, *Osnovopoložnicite na makedonskata dramska literatura* (Skopje, 1976). 2nd edition, pp. 144–251.

67. On Racin see Ristovski, *Kočo Racin. Istorisko-literaturni istražuvanja;* A. Spasov, ed., *Kočo Racin. Stihovi i proza* (Skopje, 1966); P. A. Korobar, ed., *K. Racin vo spomenite na sovremenicite* (Skopje, 1972).

Vardar Macedonia. However, they ended up in Sofia, where before World War II, they published collections of poetry in Macedonian.[68] Markovski pointed out to an official in the Ministry of Education, which until then had been his financial sponsor in Bulgaria, that he had done this because "his co-nationals would not understand if he were to write in the Bulgarian language, and his poems [were] intended for them."[69]

In the second half of the 1930s, journals such as *Luč* (Skopje, 1937–1938) and *Naša reč* (Skopje, 1939–1941), which focused on Macedonian affairs, published scholarly and literary contributions, many of them in Macedonian, by a growing number of younger Macedonian intellectuals. Finally, on the eve of the war, the Regional Committee of the CPY for Macedonia put out its short-lived illegal official organs *Bilten* in 1940 in Serbo-Croatian and Macedonian, and *Iskra* in 1941 in Macedonian.[70]

But Macedonian life was most vibrant in Bulgaria, particularly within the large Macedonian community in Sofia, which included significant numbers of Macedonian activists and intellectuals from every corner of divided Macedonia. As in the past, official Bulgaria still hoped to use Macedonian patriotism to further the cause of Bulgarianism. Its traditional patronizing attitude toward the Macedonians allowed for a more tolerant milieu. There, unlike in Vardar Macedonia, the national name was freely used, a multitude of institutions and organizations identifying with Macedonia existed, and numerous publications carrying the national name appeared. It also accounts for the wide ranging and greater influence of the IMRO (Un.) among the Macedonians in Bulgaria.[71]

Young, nationally conscious members of the intelligentsia dominated the so-called Macedonian Progressive Movement (MPM) in

68. S. Risteski, *Sozdavanjeto*, pp. 106–08; Ristovski, *Projavi i profili*, I, 220; Drugovac, *Madedonskata literatura*, pp. 193–211.

69. Arhiv Jugoslavije (Belgrade), Fond 66-Minsterstvo prosvete, Fasc. 79/222, no. 300, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Belgrade) to Ministry of Education, March 6, 1940.

70. D. Aleksić, *"Naša Reč", 1939–1941: Od istorijata na napredniot pečat vo Makedonija* (Skopje, 1960); Ristovski, *Projavi i profili*, pp. 264–72.

71. Mitrev, *Pirinska Makedonija*, pp. 203–25; Katardžiev, *Borba za razvoj i afirmacija*, pp. 241–76; Ristovski, *Makedonskata nacija*, II, pp. 495–560; and *Projavi i profili*, I, pp. 221–58.

Bulgaria and its many, often short-lived, organs.[72] In 1935, under the direction of a young intellectual, Angel Dinev, there appeared perhaps the most significant Macedonian publication in the 1930s: *Makedonski vesti* (1935–1936), a journal covering history, learning and literature.

The circle which formed around *Makedonski vesti* embraced an entire generation of leftward-leaning Macedonians. They published sources and studies on Macedonian history, on national, cultural, and economic issues, as well as literary efforts in prose and poetry. Even though they wrote and published mostly in Bulgarian, the language of their formal education, they strove consciously to affirm the existence of a Macedonian nation and to create a Macedonian national culture. Like their counterparts in Vardar Macedonia, they emphasized the need to create a Macedonian literary language, and they always treated Macedonian themes with piety, but with the infusion of a greater and much more certain national revolutionary zeal.[73]

The group around *Makendonski vesti* prepared the ground for the establishment of the illegal Macedonian Literary Circle (MLK) in Sofia (1938–1941), which constituted the most remarkable expression of national cultural activity during the inter-war years.[74] Its founding members included some of the most promising Macedonian literary talents living in Bulgaria at the time, but with their roots in all three parts of their native land.[75] The chairman and guiding force was the proletarian poet Nikola Jonkov Vapcarov, whose cycle of poems, "Songs for the Fatherland," contained in his collection *Motorni Pesni* (Sofia, 1940), was a clear testament to his Macedonian consciousness.[76]

72. Among them were: *Makedonski studentski list* (1931–32), *Makedonska studentska tribuna* (1932–33), *Makedonska mladezh* (1933–34), *Makedonsko zname* (1932–34), *Makedonska revoliutsia* (1935), *Makedonska zemia* (1936).

73. Ristovski, *Projavi i profili*, 1, pp. 230–46; Mitrev, *Pirinska Makedonija*, pp. 217–20.

74. A good collection of writings on the MLK is found in G. Todorovski, ed., *Nikola J. Vapcarov, Tvorbi* (Skopje, 1979). See especially the articles by Mitrev, pp. 313–34, Ristovski, pp. 356–90, and Todorovski, pp. 429–47.

75. Among its leading members were: N. J. Vapcarov, A. Popov, M. Smatrakalev (A. Žarov), K. Nikolov, G. Abadžiev, D. Mitrev, and V. Aleksandrov. It was later joined by V. Markovski, K. Nedelkovski, and M. Zafirovski who had arrived more recently from Yugoslavia.

76. See note 74 and M. Isaev, ed., *Sbornik Nikola Ionkov Vaptsarov* (Sofia, 1947); Bŭlgarska akademiia na naukite, *Nikola Vaptsarov. Spomeni, pisma, dokumenti* (Sofia, 1953);

The Circle maintained contact with their counterparts in Vardar Macedonia, with whose writings they were acquainted; for instance, they read, discussed, and admired Kočo Racin's poetry in Macedonian. Like Racin, they were familiar with the work and ideas of K. P. Misirkov, the ideologist of Macedonianism of the Ilinden period.[77] Indeed, they took upon themselves the tasks that Misirkov had set before the Macedonian intelligentsia: to create a Macedonian literary language and culture; to enhance the national consciousness of the Macedonians.[78] As Vapcarov declared to the Circle, the last task was to let the world understand that "we are a separate nation, a separate people, with our own particular attributes which distinguish us from the other South Slavs."[79]

In such organizations located in all three parts of Macedonia, supported by the IMRO (Un.) and by the Balkan Communist parties, the youthful Macedonian intelligentsia during this period nurtured national ideas and devotion to the national cause. They also elaborated a cohesive national ideology on the Left, which, while explaining their people's past and present, also put forward a national program for the future. Their conceptions were not all new; they presented largely a synthesis of the earlier views of the *Makendonisti* and the left wing of the original revolutionary movement, but they were amalgamated with many Communist doctrines of their own time.

They rejected the Bulgarian, Greek, and Serbian claims and denials of the existence of a Macedonian identity. As a declaration issued by the IMRO (Un.) in February 1935 stated:

> Just as the Macedonians under Greek rule are neither "Slovophones" nor "pure" Greeks, [just] as the Macedonians under Serbian rule are not "pure" Serbs, so too the Macedonians under Bulgarian rule are not Bulgarians and neither do they wish to become [Bulgarians]. The

D. Mitrev, *Vapcarov. Esei i statii* (Skopje, 1954). A useful selected bibliography is found in Todorovski, ed., *Nikola J. Vapcarov*, pp. 452–53, 479–84.

77. Mitrev, *Pirinska Makedonija*, pp. 224–55, and in Todorovski, ed., *Nikola J. Vapcarov*, pp. 326–28; Ristovski, *Projavi i profili*, I, pp. 252–58; K. Solunski, *Kuzman Josifovski-Pitu (Život-delovreme)* (Skopje, 1973), 2 vols., I, p. 70–71.

78. Misirkov, *Za makedonckite raboti*, pp. 28, 40–44.

79. According to A. Žarov (M. Smatrakalev) in Isaev, ed., *Sbornik Nikola Ionkov Vaptsarov*, p. 177.

> Macedonian people have their own past, their present and future, not as a patch attached to imperialist Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia, but rather as an independent Slav element which possesses all the attributes of an independent nation, [and] which, for decades now, has been struggling to win its right to self determination, including secession into a political state unit independent from the imperialist states that now oppress it.[80]

Indeed, they argued that the Macedonians possessed all the attributes of an ethnic and independent nation: their own territory and economic unity, their own language, common national character, and their own history. "All these elements, taken together," wrote V. Ivanovski, a well-known Macedonian publicist in Bulgaria, "make up the Macedonian nation. They are irrefutable proof that we, Macedonians, do not belong to the Serbian, nor to the Bulgarian or Greek nation. We are a separate nation."[81]

This nation was formed in a long historical process. It began with the arrival and settlement of the Slavs in Macedonia and their amalgamation with the remnants of the ancient Macedonians, and continued well into the past century.[82] Indeed, to their own time.[83] It reached its height with the national awakening in the nineteenth century, which, according to the publicist and historian K. Veselinov, was "independent," "it followed its own path," even though it was impeded by various outside interventions.[84] Furthermore, K. Racin, the Communist activist and poet, argued that this separate and independent Macedonian awakening was much like those of the Bulgarians and the Serbs. Responding to charges made by Professor N. Vulić, a prominent archeologist and proponent of Great Serbianism, that even the Macedonian name was contrived and invented, Racin

80. *Makedonsko delo*, X: 195 (February, 1935), p. 8; also in H. Andonov-Poljanski, ed., *Dokumenti za borbata na makedonskiot narod za samostojnost i za nacionalna država* (Skopje, 1981), 2 vols., II, no. 114, p. 220. (Herafter cited as *Dokumenti*). The English edition of this valuable collection of documents is not always well and clearly translated. See also "Polozhenieto v Makedoniia i zadachite na VMRO (Obedinena)," *Makedonsko delo*, 8, 185 (April, 1934), pp. 1–2.

81. Bistrishki (V. Ivanovski), "Zashcho nie Makedoncite sme otdelna naciia?" in *Chetvŭrtiia kongres na Makedonskiia naroden sŭiuz v Amerika* (Detroit, 1934), pp. 47–48.

82. *Dokumenti*, II, no. 59, p. 122.

83. Veselinov, *Vŭzrazhdaneto na Makedoniia*, p. 12.

84. Ibid., p. 14.

maintained that it was no more so than the Bulgarian and Serbian names.[85] These historic names, he went on,

> were taken from the treasure chest of history. The Serbs took from their history that which they once had. The Bulgarians did the very same thing. What did our Macedonians do? They did the very same thing! . . . There was an awareness among the Macedonians that this land had at one time been called Macedonia. They took from their historical treasure chest their name just as the Serbian and Bulgarian ideologists did. In this manner they inscribed their Macedonian name on the banner of their national revival. I think that our Macedonian revolutionary movement under the Turks did the same thing as your Serbs as well as the Bulgarians had done in the course of [their] struggle.[86]

The history of the Macedonian people and particularly the memory of the original IMRO and its ill-fated Ilinden uprising of 1903 became essential components of this Macedonian nationalism on the left. The study and knowledge of the Macedonians' past was to serve as an inspiration for their own as well as for the future national struggles. In concluding his history of the Macedonian people A. Dinev declared:

> The people who gave the alphabet to the entire Slav world, who emitted from its womb the great revolutionary reformer Bogomil and the Puritan warrior Samuil, who lived in a revolutionary republic formed secretly on the territory of the Sultan's state for nineteen years from 1893 to 1913; who selflessly created for itself the Ilinden epic; who carried on a bloody armed struggle against the armed propagandas; who clashed with the Sultan's troops in the streets of Constantinople; That [sic] people will never, never forget its own historical past and, despite the absence of any freedom, will not lose its ethnic character, nor its spirit, nor its mother's speech.[87]

To repeat again, this largely youthful Macedonian national intelligentsia was rejected, denied recognition, and persecuted by the official state and society in Bulgaria, Greece, and Yugoslavia. At the time

85. *Dokumenti*, II, no. 86, pp. 158–59 and note 210.
86. Ibid., pp. 159–60.
87. A. Dinev, *Makedonskite slaviani* (Sofia, 1938), pp. 71–72.

they had nowhere else to turn except to the Communist ideology of protest that recognized their existence. Consequently, although all of them were not Communists, formal members of the three Balkan Communist parties, they were all "leftists" whose view of the world was shaped largely by the teachings of Marxism-Leninism.[88]

They saw and understood the world as being divided into two antagonistic fronts engaged in a life-and-death struggle. As the program of the MPM in Bulgaria put it: "On one side is the front of the *imperialists,* who hold under national slavery many European and colonial peoples and who oppress their own working masses; and on the other side is the common front of the *socially and nationally oppressed*."[89] The Macedonian people were forced to endure both national and social oppression under the yoke of Bulgarian, Greek, or Serbian imperialism aided by their agents of Macedonian origin. And, the only way out for them, as it was for the apostles of the original Macedonian movement, was a mass revolutionary struggle.[90] In the Macedonian case, this struggle was to be a national struggle first and foremost, a struggle for the national liberation and unification of Macedonia and the Macedonians, since without national liberation there would be no social emancipation. "The Macedonian Progressive Movement is national, for it has as its aim the national liberation of Macedonia," declared *Makedonsko zname*. "It is not a party, nor a social or a class [movement]; it is popular, democratic, because its very aim [the national liberation of Macedonia] is a popular, democratic task."[91] The same sentiments were echoed in its program:

> The Macedonian Progressive Movement is an independent national movement. . . . It is not struggling for socialism, but for the national

88. I borrowed "the convenient barbarism 'Leftists' " from Captain P. H. Evans' Report, P.R.O., F0371/43649, Enclosure 8.

89. Bibliotcka "Makedonsko zname," no. 1. *Ideite i zadachite na Makedonskoto progresivno dvizhenie v Bŭlgaria* (Sofia, 1933), p. 6.

90. This is a common theme constantly stressed in the "Leftist" publications and programs. See for instance *Ibid.*, p. 45; the IMRO (Un.) Resolution in *Makedonsko delo* 8, p. 185 (April, 1934), pp. 1–2; the program of the Macedonian National Student Group in Sofia (MNSG) in Ristovski, *Makedonskata nacija*, 2, p. 535; the program of the Young Macedonian Revolutionary Organization in Skopje (MMRO) in Ristovski, *Kočo Racin*, pp. 141–42; the program of the Macedonian People's Movement (MANAPO) in Vardar Macedonia in *Dokumenti*, II, no. 74, p. 145.

91. *Makedonsko zname*, 2, 17 (December 14, 1933), p. 2.

liberation of Macedonia. In what kind of economic form will Macedonia be organized —that will be decided by the Macedonian population after its national liberation."[92]

The Macedonian intelligentsia expected the struggle to be difficult, because it was directed against three oppressor-states as well as against *Vrkhovism,* the Right IMRO, which, according to them, while still wearing a Macedonian "mask" and "mantle," had in fact betrayed the legacy of Ilinden and the cause of Macedonian national liberation.[93] Nonetheless, they remained confident of victory, for they considered their struggle as an integral part of "the common front of the oppressed against imperialism." They were united with all the enslaved nations as well as with the working class movement of the ruling states; and this alliance was "especially close with the enslaved nationalities and the socially oppressed in the three Balkan countries among whom Macedonia is partitioned."[94]

As already pointed out, in general terms, they tended to identify the Macedonian national liberation with the Comintern slogan: "Independent Macedonia in a Federation of Balkan People's Republics." They placed far greater emphasis on the Macedonian national question than the Communists did, however, and were thus unwilling to relegate its resolution to the distant and uncertain future when a Balkan Communist federation would come into existence. In 1933, *Makendonska pravda,* an organ of the Macedonian emigration in Sofia, published a series of articles calling for "the federalization of the South Slavs on the basis of full equality and equal respect for the rights of all peoples and for the creation out of the existing Yugoslav chaos of a free state of free autonomous regions."[95] Its realization would require the destruction of the Serbian dictatorship and the establishment of a new people's government. "Only such a truly people's government would be in a position to resolve not only the Macedonian problem, but also the great problem of the

92. *Ideite i zadachite,* p. 7.

93. Ibid., pp. 12, 16–19; See also "Pŭtia na edinstvo v makedonskoto dvizhenie," *Makedonsko zname,* I, 2 (August 3, 1932), p. 1; *Dokumenti,* II, no. 117, pp. 227–32.

94. *Ideite i zadachite,* p. 6. See also the other sources cited in note 90.

95. D. Popeftimov, "Nashiat pŭt," *Makednnska pravda* (Sofia), I, p. 1 (October 3, 1933), 1 in Ristovski, *Makedonskata nacija,* II, p. 537. Ristotvski gives extensive citations from *Makedonska pravda* on pp. 537–41.

unification of South Slavdom in one great, people's, Yugoslav republic without dictators and hegemons." In such a republic will be found the final solution of "our Macedonian question and *Macedonia will be free.*"[96] Responding to a reader's inquiry as to whether it fought for a Balkan or for a South Slav federation, *Makedonska pravda* clarified its position: "Our ideal and [the ideal] of all good Balkanites *is and must be the Balkan federation.*" Only a Balkan federation, it went on, could reconcile the cultural, economic, and political interests of the Balkan peoples and overcome their antagonisms. We talk about a South Slav federation as *one stage toward the future Balkan federation,* which would be easier to attain after the realization of the first."[97] In Yugoslav Macedonia the activities of the IMRO (Un.) were restricted and its influence was not as widespread as in Bulgaria. Macedonian students and intellectuals there were influenced much more by the Communist party of Yugoslavia and tended to focus their attention primarily on Vardar Macedonia. They sought national liberation and equality for themselves, for their part of Macedonia, in a restructured federated Yugoslavia as a first step on the road to national unification and presumably to a Balkan Communist federation.[98]

A more searching and critical analysis of the Comintern position on the Macedonian question came from the Macedonian Progressive Movement (MPM) in Bulgaria and its organ *Makedonsko zname.* They argued that it approached and defined the Macedonian national struggle "too vaguely and inconcretely." It assumed that the new Macedonian Ilinden would "come only as a common Ilinden of all Balkan peoples"; as a result of the simultaneous struggle of the nationally and socially oppressed in all the Balkan countries.[99] It also suggested that the liberation of Macedonia would depend on the formation of the Balkan federation. This was obviously not acceptable to them, since they were not willing to postpone indefinitely the

96. *Makedonska pravda,* I, 2 (1933) in Ibid., p. 538.

97. *Makedonska pravda,* I, 4 (1933), in Ibid., p. 540.

98. See the program of the Young Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (MMRO) in Ristovski, *Kočo Racin,* p. 141–44, and of the Macedonian People's Movement (MANAPO) in *Dokumenti,* II, no. 74, p. 145. See also Miljovski, *Makedonskoto prašanje,* pp. 140–45.

99. D. Dinkov, "Na pravilni pozicii," *Makedonsko zname,* II, 8 (1934), p. 1.

100. *Ideite i zadachite,* p. 12.

liberation of Macedonia.[100] Moreover, they complained that the Comintern position did not take into account the fact that "the uneven decline of imperialism" would result in the "uneven development of the liberation struggle" in the Balkan countries. The liberation struggle "could succeed first in one of the oppressor states and thus the liberation be achieved first in one of the three partitions of Macedonia which would establish the beginning and become the base for the liberation of the entire Macedonia." [101]

D. Dinkov pointed to the most important contradiction embodied in the two halves of the Comintern slogan: "Balkan Federation" and "Independent Macedonia." He argued that the former restricted the right of the Macedonian people to self-determination to an autonomous status, thus denying to them the right to establish a separate, independent state-political unit. The latter, on the other hand, was truly separatist and rejected in advance the unification of the Macedonian people with other liberated peoples along autonomous or federal lines. For this reason Dinkov dismissed both conceptions as "incorrect" and maintained that the struggle of the Macedonian people should not be forced in advance into the straitjacket of either federalism or of an independent state. "How the Macedonian people will use its right to self-determination up to separation, [that] will depend on the concrete conditions after the masses win their struggle for liberation." [102] Consequently, the MPM chose to discard the old Comintern position—"Independent Macedonia in a Federation of Balkan People's Republics"—and to replace it with a call for "the right of the Macedonian people to self-determination up to its separation into an independent state-political unit." [103]

In accordance with this new thinking the MPM called on the Macedonians in each part of divided Macedonia to demand the right to self-determination and to carry on their struggle jointly with all the nationally and socially oppressed in their particular state. After the expected victory the Macedonian national region would constitute

101. Dinkov, "Na pravilni pozicii," in *Makedonsko zname; Ideite i zadachite*, pp. 8–9; "Lozungŭt za samoopredelenie na Makedonia," *Makedonsko zname*, II, 22 (1934), p. 2.

102. Dinkov in *Makedonsko zname*, II, 18, p. 1.

103. Ibid.; see also *Ideite i zadachite*, pp. 10, 12–13, and the Resolution of the IMRO (Un.) in *Makedonsko delo*, 8: 185 (April, 1934), pp. 1–2.

itself as an autonomous small state (*dùrzhavitsa*) within the larger liberated country. "That autonomous Macedonian small state will serve as a *base* in the struggle for a *united Macedonian state*. It will serve as an example, will encourage, and will provide support to the other Macedonian regions to do the same, in order to attain the national liberation of the whole of Macedonia." [104] This was to apply equally to all three parts of Macedonia. "*Which one should start first will depend on whether the required conditions will mature first in Yugoslavia, in Greece, or in Bulgaria*. We will follow this path until the liberation of the three Macedonian regions in one united Macedonian People's Republic." [105] Thus, although there were differences and debates among the Macedonian leftists over short-term tactical questions, they were generally united in their final aim: national liberation and unification, a free Macedonia.[106]

Inspired by such aims, conscious Macedonians, both Communists and bourgeois nationalists, joined in large numbers the Communist-led resistance movements in Bulgaria, Greece, and Yugoslavia during the Second World War. Long before it came to an end, however, the Macedonian question had again become "the apple of discord," this time dividing the Communists in the Balkans. The Communist parties of Bulgaria, Greece, and Yugoslavia became locked in a silent struggle over Macedonia. This struggle continued in the turbulent aftermath of World War II in the Balkans: through the abortive Yugoslav-Bulgarian negotiations for a federation, the Civil War in Greece, and the Soviet-Yugoslav conflict. Because of the opposing forces involved in this struggle and of the internal and international complications that ensued, the Macedonians failed to achieve unification; and they attained national emancipation only in Vardar or Yugoslav Macedonia.

104. *Ideite i zadachite*, pp. 9–10.

105. *Makedonsko zname*, II, 22 (1934), p. 2. See also *Ideite i zadachite*, p. 9.

106. See the informative and illuminating discussions by K. Miljovski, "Motivite na revolucijata, 1941–1944 godina vo Makedonija," *Istorija* 10:1 (1974), p. 19; and by C. Uzunovski, "Vostanieto vo 1941 vo Makedonija," *Istorija* 10:2 (1974), p. 103.

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